

**JUST ANOTHER COLD, FARAWAY NORDIC COUNTRY? –  
FINLAND’S COUNTRY IMAGE IN CHINA**

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Tiivistelmä – Referat – Abstract <p>Tämä pro gradu -tutkielma käsittelee Suomen maakuva Kiinassa. Kiina on vuosina 2016-2018 yksi Suomen maakuvatyön fokusmaista, ja tutkielman tavoitteena onkin tarkastella maakuvatyön vaikutusten nykytilaa sekä tunnistaa Suomen vahvuuksia Kiinassa.</p> <p>Tutkimus toteutettiin laajana 1004 vastaajan verkkokyselynä kuudessa kiinalaisessa suurkaupungissa. Kysely tehtiin yhteistyössä ulkoministeriön viestintäosaston kanssa. Kyselyn perusjoukkona toimi kiinalainen korkeastikoulutettu työssäkäyvä keskiluokka. Kyselyaineiston analyysissä käytettiin sekä kvalitatiivisia että kvantitatiivisia metodeja.</p> <p>Kyselyvastausten analysointia varten maakuva-käsitettä lähestyttiin Kevin Lane Kellerin (1993) muodostaman brändimielikuvien ominaisuuksia käsittelevän teorian mukaisesti. Tätä hyödyntäen kyselyaineistosta mitattiin Suomi-kuvan tietoisuus-, vahvuus-, myönteisyys- sekä ainutlaatuisuus-aspektit kiinalaisten vastaajien keskuudessa. Tulokset osoittavat, että kyselyyn vastanneet olivat hyvin tietoisia Suomen olemassaolosta, sekä suhtautuivat Suomeen ensisijaisesti hyvin positiivisesti. Suomi on yleisesti ottaen erittäin tunnettu kylmästä ja lumisesta ilmastosta, revontulista, kauniista luonnosta, joulupukista, Nokiasta sekä pohjoismaalaisuudestaan.</p> <p>Vaikka Suomi yhdistettiin mielikuvissa vahvasti Pohjoismaihin, iso osa vastaajista osasi nimetä myös ainutlaatuisesti suomalaisia kuvailuelementtejä. Sillä, kuinka lähelle Suomea vastaaja oli aiemmin matkustanut, oli heikko korrelaatio kykyyn kuvailla Suomea ainutlaatuisesti suomalaisilla attribuuteilla. Sille, että preferenssillä matkustaa Suomeen yli muiden Pohjoismaiden, sekä kyvyllä kuvailla Suomea ainutlaatuisilla attribuuteilla olisi korrelaatio, ei tutkimustulosten perusteella löytynyt vahvistusta.</p> <p>Tutkielma tarjoaa uutta tietoa kiinalaisten mielikuvista Suomesta, sekä siitä miten Suomen maakuva Kiinassa suhteutuu muihin pohjoismaalaisiin mielikuviin. Tutkimus hyödyttää suomalaisia maakuvatyön parissa työskenteleviä organisaatioita ja yrityksiä Kiinassa niin julkisuusdiplomatian, vienninedistämisen kuin myös viestinnän alalla. Tulokset valottavat Suomen valtteja, joita voidaan tehokkaasti hyödyntää tulevaisuuden maakuvatyössä.</p>		
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## **1 Introduction**

In the recent years, the accelerated globalization has raised discussion on distinctiveness of places. “Glocalization” – which combines the words global and local – summarizes the idea of being unique even amidst the globalized world where a vast deal of values, ideas and lifestyles are shared. Symptoms of these trends are visible in the forms of internal nationalism and external country branding. Country branding is a form of response to the increased global competition of resources – were it talented workforce, economic investments or influential power. It is a means of promoting positive aspects of your country and trying to gain favorable reputation. This gained reputation is often hoped to benefit the country socially, economically and politically.

Lately, China’s increasing economic significance in the world politics has probably not been left unnoticed by a single country in the world. China’s foreign direct investments (FDI) and outbound Chinese tourisms are resources that many countries abroad wish to get a share of. Finland is one of them, and Sino-Finnish trade relations have boosted over the past few decades. Nowadays, China is Finland’s 6<sup>th</sup> largest export destination, and 4<sup>th</sup> biggest trade partner in imports (BOFIT 2017). In 2017, for example the overnights of Chinese tourists in Finland were one of the fastest growing figures of the year (Visit Finland 2018). More and more collaboration and resources are allocated for Finland’s focus in China in many different sectors, and it is no surprise that China has been named as one of Finland’s focus countries in country branding work abroad (Finland Promotion Board 2017: 2).

Therefore, it is justifiably interesting to look into Finland’s image and country branding work in China: what has been achieved by now, and how it can be developed in the future. The research questions that this research seeks to answer are the following:

1. What is Finland known for in China? What kind of image associations is the knowledge based on?
2. How positive or negative are these images of Finland?

3. How does the country image of Finland relate with the images of other Nordic countries?

This research paper is constructed into seven chapters. Chapters 2 and 3 conduct literature reviews on the topic. The review will firstly take a look on the theoretical frameworks of country image and country branding. After that the history of country branding traditions of Finland and the other Nordic countries will be examined. Chapter 4 introduces the materials and methodologies used in this research, and chapter 5 discusses the results. Chapter 6 analyses the results deeper, makes conclusions, as well as discusses critically the setting of the research and makes suggestions for improvement in the future. Chapter 7 summarizes the work's main targets and results.

## **2 Country image and country branding**

Until recent years, research and literature on country branding and country images has generally been criticized for the lack of theoretical modelling and conceptual definitions (e.g. Beerli and Martin 2004: 658; Hytönen 2012: 21; Andersson 2014: 143). For a long time, country images and country branding were analyzed from the premises of corporate and product branding and observed mainly through case studies. This approach has been accused of oversimplifying the phenomenon and thus preventing the creation of a holistic validating of the theoretical framework (Hytönen 2012: 21; Andersson 2014: 143). However, in the 2000s, new approaches were taken for the theoretical premises of country image formation and creation, ranging from previous research on tourism to geography and national identities. This chapter looks into the different aspects and theoretical frameworks that have been associated with country images and country branding. Subchapter 2.1 examines the concepts relating to country image and country branding, looks into the different theoretical backgrounds from which the topic has been approached in previous literature, and also on the different “good practices” that have been discovered from previous case study researches. Subchapter 2.2 looks into the reasons why country image and country branding are seen as important topics to research and discuss, and subchapter 2.3 deconstructs the phenomenon and explores different ways to measure country images.

## 2.1 Country image

The definitions of some key concepts that this thesis and its source materials talk about should be made clear. The title of this work mentions country image, and the first part of this term – country – should be defined. In fact, country is not a common concept used in scientific research. Numerous political and social science researchers have analyzed the concepts of nation and state, which are sometimes colloquially used as interchangeable words with country. Scientifically speaking, however, these concepts do have a significant difference.

### *Country, nation and state*

Nation refers to a group of people, and it has been defined as an ethnic group with a political goal: a demand to obtain control over a territory – a state (Eriksen 2010: 10, 144). A state, on the other hand, is a territorial unit that is politically defined with borders (Connor 1978: 300). In many cases, these borders are seen to follow mostly the “territorial distribution of a national group” (Connor 1978: 303), and therefore, many researchers talk of nation-states. States and nation-states are defined by the quality of having a certain kind of power: a monopoly of having legitimation to use violence and taxation within the territory (Eriksen 2010: 131). Also, a published legislation, a state administration, an educational system and a common language are usually seen as qualities of a (nation-)state (Eriksen 2010: 131). Nations, states, as well as their borders are all perceived as political constructs, which means that they are always defined by people and their power relations (e.g. Schmitt-Egner 2002: 182; Paasi 2002: 159; Anderson 2006: 6; Eriksen 2010: 120).

In this research, it is assumed that the term country can be used interchangeably with the concept of state. It is perceived as sufficient that country is seen as a politically agreed territorial entity, and the research will not go more into depth of the anatomy of these concepts and the constructivist theory. Many of the source texts of this research use both concepts of country or nation, and it has been pointed out that the concepts of nation brand, state brand and country brand have been used interchangeably in different pieces

of research (Szondi 2008: 5). Therefore, regardless of which concept the source texts use, this research chooses to use the term country.

### *Brand and image*

Brands and images are sometimes used interchangeably – such as the Finland Promotion Board’s review (2017c: 6) of Finland’s country image work does – therefore it is important to look into their definitions and distinctions. Kotler (1991: 442 cit. Keller 1993: 2) defines brand as “a name, term, sign, symbol, or design, or combination of them which is intended to identify the goods and services of one seller or group of sellers and to differentiate them from those of competitors”. It is described as the sum of *everything* – “all tangible and intangible elements” – that the consumer perceives and thinks of when thinking of the product, service or organization in question (Moilanen and Rainisto 2008: 14; 2009: 6). A brand brings added value to the consumer and is always seen as a promise to fulfil certain expectations that the consumer has (Anholt 2007: 7; Moilanen and Rainisto 2008: 14, 16; 2009: 6). All brands should have qualities or elements that differentiates it from other similar products, services or organizations, and makes it unique (Anholt 2007: 7; Moilanen and Rainisto 2008: 18, 22; 2009: 6). The concept of brand has its roots in livestock branding, where a hot branding iron was used to mark the owner of the cattle (Lindroos et al. 2005: 20; Hytönen 2012: 46). The use of the word brand for was adapted for product marketing as the industrial manufacturing advanced in the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, as the overall consumption increased and the need to mark and differentiate the products from each other increased (Lindroos et al. 2005: 20; Hytönen 2012: 47).

Therefore, brand is a promise, a reputation, and a way of differentiating oneself. Branding as a process is the “designing, planning and communicating the name and the identity, in order to build or manage the reputation” (Anholt 2007: 4). It is also a means of marketing that attaches certain wanted images to the product, service or organization, and it is communicated to the target group (Bourgeon-Renault 2000: 6-7 cit. Hytönen 2012: 46). The marketer creates the *brand identity* – the message that it wishes to convey to the consumer via marketing communications – and the *brand image* is the



interpretation that the consumer makes of the received message (Anholt 2007:5; Moilanen and Rainisto 2008: 16; 2009: 7). Therefore, the owners of the product, service or organization are not the owners of the brands, nor can they create a brand by themselves: the brand is always created in the mind of the consumer (Lindroos et al. 2005: 21; Anholt 2003: 4; 2007: 5; Moilanen and Rainisto 2008: 14; 2009: 7). Marketers cannot force a brand to develop in the minds of consumers but can only act as the facilitators for the brand creation process (Moilanen and Rainisto 2008: 15-16).

The conveyed marketing messages can sometimes encounter different kinds of filters or disturbances that distort or variate the messages and create different kinds of images that were intended (Moilanen and Rainisto 2008: 23; 2009: 12). A brand exists only when a sufficient amount of consumers perceive the brand image the same way and feel that the branded object offers added value compared to its competitors (Laakso 2003: 46; Moilanen and Rainisto 2008: 14, 25; 2009: 7, 13). Because the brand is created in the minds of consumers, the brand identity cannot differ too much from the consumers' expectations, as otherwise it loses its credibility. Brands are primarily to support and strengthen assumptions and beliefs that already exist in the minds of consumers (Laakso 2003: 112).

Another frequently cited definition for brands is that brand is an image (Lindroos et al. 2005: 21; Hytönen 2012: 133), and the brand marketers aim to specifically influence the image development process (Hytönen 2012: 135) So what is an image then? Image has been defined as the impressions, interpretations and opinions that the receiver has of a perceived object based on his or her knowledge, beliefs, experiences and observations (Baloglu and McCleary 1999: 871; Hytönen 2012: 133). It has been described as “a mental representation of an object or place which is not physically before the observer” (Fridgen 1987 cit. Baloglu and McCleary 1999: 871). Already in the early times of the formation of image theory in 1950s, it was stated that rather than based on the objective reality, human behavior and the made decisions base themselves on images of the reality (Boulding 1956 and Martineau 1958 cit. Baloglu and McCleary 1999: 871).

In the infinite information overflow of this world, images help us structure all information into an understandable and apprehensible form (Lindroos et al. 2005: 18, 22). Images are not pictures in the mind per se, even though they have some similar properties as pictures do (O'Shaughnessy and O'Shaughnessy 2000: 57; Lindroos et al. 2005: 22). Images can be rather personal and unique from person to person, as the person's own previous knowledge, experiences and character influences on how he or she perceives and interprets the received information, as well as what kind of an image is created in the mind (Lindroos et al. 2005: 22; Hytönen 2012: 135). Not only do observations influence on what kind of images are created, but images also influence on how the person observes individual details of the world (Lindroos et al. 2005: 23), which again influences the person's behavior and choices made. Researchers see the formation of images as a continuous process, meaning that images are never "ready", but develop and change everlastingly according to context and the person's identity (O'Shaughnessy and O'Shaughnessy 2000: 57; Lindroos et al. 2005: 24). However, images are always right and true, as there are no "wrong" ways of perceiving and interpreting received messages (Moilanen and Rainisto 2008: 24).

As with brands, the formation of images always requires two sides: the object, of which the image is created, and the one in whose mind the image formulates (Hytönen 2012: 48). Both brands and images are difficult to change or steer if it has already been constructed in the mind of the receiver (Hytönen 2012: 48). When speaking of brands and images, the concept of *reputation* is also often mentioned. Reputation affects whether the marketing messages are accepted and believed (Anholt 2010: 91). In other words, reputation consists of images, but is also influenced by the observations and interpretations of messages, thus influencing on the formation of images. Another often brought up concept is *stereotype*, which in a sense is a simplifying image. A stereotype is "a biased (usually prejudicial) view of a group or class of people - - that is resistant to change or correction from countervailing evidence" and "play[s] a role in the overall image of a nation" (O'Shaughnessy and O'Shaughnessy 2000: 57).

### *Images and branding in the context of countries*

It has been argued that countries can be seen as brands, as in the minds of consumers they are a sum of representations and images, and can act in the same ways as brands do (Anholt 2003: 119; Moilanen and Rainisto 2008: 14). Anholt (2007: 7) argues that using the concept of brand on countries is useful, “because it captures so well the idea that places need to understand and manage their internal identity and their external reputation”. Likewise, researchers also talk of country image, and it has been defined as the entirety of beliefs and perceptions the receiver of messages develop in their minds (Kotler et al. 1993 cit. Kotler and Gertner 2002: 251; Moilanen and Rainisto 2009: 17). Country brand and country image are concepts that are sometimes perceived as synonyms for each other: they are both sums of beliefs, perceptions and feelings that a person has of a country. However, in the country branding theory they do have a difference. Country images are described to be mainly unplanned, coincidentally formed perceptions, whereas country brands are the result of conscious work done in order to affect the perceptions. Country images can be influenced, and with conscious work and activities a country image can be developed into a country brand. (Moilanen and Rainisto 2008: 15; Neacsu et al. 2016: 950). Sometimes researchers talk of country reputation in the context of country brands and country image (Anholt 2010: 2; Bell 2016: 248).

Even though it is agreed that countries do possess (brand) images, some researchers doubt whether the concept of branding should be implemented on the context of a country (Anholt 2010: 4; Fan 2010: 97). One of the main reasons for this is the argument that a country should not be seen as a product, because a country is far more diverse and complex, and the perceptions and images of them are far richer than those of a single product or corporation. Therefore, countries should not and cannot be branded the same way as products (O’Shaughnessy and O’Shaughnessy 2000: 64; Anholt 2003: 129; 2007: 5; Country Brand Delegation 2010: 23; Hytönen 2012: 125; Bell 2016: 247-248).

Finland’s Country Brand Delegation’s final report published in 2010 also perceives that a country cannot be branded, but a country has a *target image*, that it wishes to use to

distinguish itself from others. Firstly, the target image outlines what the brand would ideally be. Secondly, there is the *brand*, which is the sum of all experiences, knowledge and images that a person has concerning the country. And thirdly, the *brand construction work* is the work that the enterprise or the country does, so that the brand in the people's minds would become as close to the target image as possible. (Country Brand Delegation 2010: 25-27). Moilanen and Rainisto (2009: 19) note that the country image construction process consists of two parts, which are the active stage of the message sender communicating its target identity, and the passive stage when the country image formulates in the receivers' minds. Anholt (2010: 3) on the other hand states that a country cannot be branded: governments and other stakeholders only create the setting and context for the formation of public opinion – country images. Instead of country brands Anholt uses the concept competitive identity, which he argues to have “more to do with national identity and the politics and economics of competitiveness than with branding as it is usually understood” (Anholt 2007: xi).

Anholt's view that countries cannot be branded has been criticized (e.g. Fan 2010). Even though researchers may agree with Anholt that countries cannot be branded the same way as products, they do, however, see that the techniques of branding and marketing communications can be used on countries (e.g. Gudjonsson 2005 and Fan 2006 cit. Szondi 2008: 5). In fact, country branding has been defined by several researchers as any actions that aim to influence reputation and the images that message receivers have of the country (Szondi 2008: 5; Fan 2010: 101; Neacsu et al. 2016: 950-951, 957). Bell (2016: 248) has argued that place branding should be perceived more as in the context of reputation, and Fan (2010: 101) suggests that in order to reduce misconceptions and confusion, researchers could start talking of “image management” instead of “branding”.

This thesis looks into country images, which are the outcomes that are non-intentionally formed perceptions in the minds of people outside of the country and understands country branding and country image management as the intentional construction process that aims to influence these images.

### **2.1.1 Different theoretical approaches to country image**

The concept of country images has largely arisen and evolved from the conceptual and theoretical frameworks of product and place in the fields of marketing and geography (Neacsu et al. 2016: 949). Fan (2010: 98) points out that the theoretical approaches to country image and country branding has its roots in the studies of country of origin (COO), place and destination branding, public diplomacy, and national identity. Therefore, theoretical frameworks for country image can be sought, amongst many, from the fields of business, marketing, geography, political science, and anthropology. In addition to these, country image theory can also be seen as connected to the studies of constructivism, communications, as well as power relations (Hytönen 2012: 18).

Traditionally brands have been associated with products and enterprises (Hytönen 2012: 44). Even though the concepts of brand theory were introduced to new objects – such as services or places – as late as in the 1990s (Moilanen and Rainisto 2008: 12), the concept of *country-of-origin* has been a popular and widely research topic already from the 1950s onwards (Anholt 2003: 115). The country-of-origin effect refers to when the country where the product has been manufactured influences the perception of the product (or its brand) and the decisions to buy the product. Whereas some older research papers (e.g. Jaffe and Nebenzahl 1984) may talk of ‘country image’ as in the meaning of ‘country-of-origin image’, later on a clear difference between the two terms have been made, as country-of-origin image is a far narrower concept than country image.

Anholt (2003: 40) sees the relationship of country-of-origin and country image as a positive cycle: the country-of-origin of a product will inevitably alter the consumers’ perceptions of the country itself, resulting in an altered country image, which again influences on the perceptions of the products from the country and so on. Anholt (2003: 119) also speaks of the country-of-origin effect as a ‘parent brand’, and indeed country brands have been compared to corporate umbrella brands, that label “more than one product with a single brand name” (Anholt 2003: 130; Moilanen and Rainisto 2009: 12, 114). Kavaratzis and Ashworth (2005: 511) call the deliberate use of country-of-origin effect “geographic co-branding”.

An early wave of branding places was in the tourism sector, and it is claimed that *destination branding* is the most discussed type of place branding in research literature (Kaplan et al. 2010 cit. Foroudi et al. 2016: 244). However, it is reminded that a tourist destination is foremost a (tourism) product that is just one aspect of a country, which is why it should not be mistaken for country branding or other types of place branding (Anholt 2003: 131). Destination branding does differ from regular product branding. Instead of one company that creates the individual product, a tourism destination composes of numerous different stakeholders, which makes the image management process harder to control (Moilanen and Rainisto 2009: 114). Pike and Ryan (2004: 334) argue that tourism destinations and related (service) products are mostly intangible, which is why they are immensely dependent on images and perceptions. It is seen that the destination image is a vital element and a constructor of the overall country image (Pike and Ryan 2004: 334; Anholt 2010: 93). Moreover, a positive destination image may result in the decision to travel to that particular destination, and the first-hand experience of traveling to the country has a huge and a powerful impact on the individual's image of the country (Anholt 2010: 89).

The concept of country branding and country image was long perceived to be based on the theoretical frameworks of corporate branding, but for example Andersson (2014: 151) along with other researchers (e.g. Bell 2016 and Neacsu et al. 2016) have criticized this belief of place branding being only a form of corporate branding implemented on a territorial unit. More and more concepts and theories from geography – especially from human geography – have been suggested as suitable frameworks for country branding and country images. It is understood that a place or a territorial unit is not a product, but a more complex entity with a bigger number of stakeholders and a wider range of audience than a product does (Bell 2016: 248; Neacsu et al. 2016: 944, 949; de San Eugenio Vela et al. 2017: 24). Instead of using corporate branding techniques to a place, place branding can also be understood as developing a place, in which case the theoretical framework can be incorporated from the concepts of city/regional planning or urban design theories (Hytönen 2012: 30; Neacsu et al. 2016: 947). In her research,

Andersson (2014: 150-151) looks into the different perspectives on how geographical research papers have approached place branding. She found out that in addition to discussing the relationship of place branding and country-of-origin, or comparing different best practices of place branding, research has been conducted from a variety of different perspectives. These perspectives include for example seeing place branding in the context of maintaining place images and identity, describing place branding as strategy to design and construct creative places or as a form of “urban entrepreneurialism within public administration”. Moreover, place branding can also be understood as a power mechanism where the elites of the society get to decide what qualities and images of the country are included in the country identity that will be communicated to the rest of the world.

It is argued that globalization and the increase in rapid information exchange has made “each state more aware of itself, its image, [and] its reputation” (van Ham 2001: 3), which brings the country branding theory into political science discussions. Researchers agree that a country’s political affairs affect country image and vice versa. Especially political conflicts, along with other negative events such as terrorist attacks or natural catastrophes, have negative effects on the overall country image and reduces visitors’ intentions to visit the country (Alvarez and Campo 2014: 76). Van Ham (2008: 131) describes place branding as a means for the public sector actors to proactively seek “higher premium”. Hytönen (2012: 190) has listed in her research several reasons for a state to take conscious country branding actions. These include the increase in the number of global stakeholders and the more divided structure of power, as well as the diversified relationships in international affairs, and also the increase of the importance of economic affairs. These are complex challenges that modern states have to face, and therefore new approaches – including country branding – have been taken to respond to these new challenges.

Van Ham (2001: 3) notes that the world is in “a move from the modern world of geopolitics and power to the postmodern world of images and influence”. This change refers to *soft power* that Joseph Nye (2004: 5) describes as a means that “co-opts people

rather than coerces them.” In regard to soft power and country branding, researchers (e.g. Anholt 2007: 12; Szondi 2008: 6, 14-15) speak frequently of *public diplomacy*, which is perceived to be closely related to country image management and refers to the communications and maintaining relations with foreign public audiences in order to influence their perceptions and build positive publicity. Over the years, public diplomacy has evolved from being only just a form of communication into a more complex phenomenon ranging from PR relations to the acts of executing policies (Anholt 2010: 95).

Hytönen (2012: 57) points out that country branding and country images include cultural aspects. Neacsu et al. (2016: 951) make a remark that place and its culture have an interactive relationship, as “[t]he place [makes] its mark on man (mental place) and in turn man [makes] its mark on the place (cultural landscape)”. Anholt (2003: 140-144) discusses the importance of culture as a component of the country image. He argues, that even though stakeholders might be concerned of the fact that culture does not “sell” as aggressively or return on investment as straightforward as for example products might, it is extremely important to use culture as a message element in country branding specifically for this reason of “not selling”. Anholt argues that specifically because people do not feel like cultural aspects are being “sold” to them, they may appreciate the message more. Language is named by Anholt as one of the most substantial ways to communicate culture. Cultural aspects diversify country images and make each country more unique and harder to copy, therefore easier to differentiate from the others. Anholt (2003: 142) notes that “[c]ulture is a more eloquent communicator of national image than commercial brands, even if it does work more slowly”.

Another commonly used viewpoint on country images is through theories of identities. Neacsu et al. (2016: 954) states that place branding “explain[s] the relationship between a place’s identity and its image”. In the constructivist theory of international relations, precisely identities are central factors in the system, and country branding can be compared to the use of soft power (Hytönen 2012: 190). As mentioned earlier, countries have a target image – the message it wishes to communicate and convey to the public. A



natural substance for this purpose is the identity of the country. When talking about identities that are tied to a geographical unit, researchers (e.g. Relph 1976; Paasi 1986) talk of two aspects. Firstly, there is the identity of place, which makes the particular unit unique from the others, and secondly there is the place identity, which refers to the inhabitants' identification to the particular place.

Paasi (1984: 155) sees the identity of place as objective, whereas place identity is seen as subjective, as it refers to the identifications of individuals. These identities, as well as all collective identities including ethnicity or nations, are socially constructed (Paasi 1986: 40). Anholt (2007: 16) argues that one of the most important elements in a country branding strategy is the “creating a spirit of benign nationalism amongst the populace”. De San Eugenio Vela (2013: 467) also agrees, stating that “identity has become the most important element of recognition, differentiation and commodification”, making it an important part for the country branding process. From this we can make the observation that whereas nationalism or the construction of an identity of place is selling the target image to the inhabitants inside the country, country branding is communicating the idea to the outside world.

### **2.1.2 Country image management**

Country branding, or country image management is not the same as traditional product branding. One thing that makes images of places unique and different from product brands or corporate images is that images of places cannot be directly controlled by the marketer (Papadopoulos and Heslop 2002: 295; Anholt 2010: 100). Places are complex and diverse constructs, from which visitors (the “consumers”) can pick and choose their favorite aspects. That is why, when places are marketed the marketer might not know exactly what the end product and benefits for the customers will ultimately be (Moilanen and Rainisto 2009: 21). While products might be branded by one company, for places this might mean a big group of different actors each with their own objectives and missions (Anholt 2007: 2; Moilanen and Rainisto 2008, 31; Country Brand Delegation 2010, 23). Places are very changeable, the branded object is at the same time someone's home and habitat, it is influenced by the change of seasons and it changes every day

with its people (Moilanen and Rainisto 2008, 32-33). But paradoxically the images of places are not changeful and dynamic, but in fact very stable and hard to alter once fixed (Anholt 2007: 27; 2010: 6).

So how then, does the robust country image become fixed, and from where is the country image born and created? According to Baloglu and McCleary (1999: 870), the image is influenced by both stimulus factors and personal factors. Stimulus factors – that can be thought of as external factors – include for example information sources and previous experience. Personal factors are internal and include psychological elements, such as values, motivations and personality, as well as social (sociodemographic) elements, for example age, education and marital status. Information sources can be categorized into primary and secondary sources (Beerli and Martin 2004: 660). Primary source refers to first-hand experience, for example a previous visit to the country, whereas secondary sources refer to different oral, written and visual information, for example word-of-mouth or media (Moilanen and Rainisto 2008: 15). A visual landscape can also act as a powerful source of image formation (de San Eugenio Vela et al. 2017: 37-38).

Secondary sources contain information that are communicated or in some other way conveyed to the consumers. As mentioned before, country image formation can be seen as a structure where the target image that the marketer aims to convey in its message, which encounters disturbances and filters on the way to the consumer who makes an interpretation from the message and creates an image in his mind. Keeping this in mind, Laakso (2003: 333) defines that the task of marketing and communications is to minimize the filtering of the message and thus diminish the difference between the target image and the actual image. Keller (1993: 9) points out that the more people are aware of your brand in advance, the less efforts in communications are needed to convey the message. It is perceived that the more in volume, diversity and complexity the person knows of the country, the more stable the positive image is, and less susceptible to negative news (Anholt 2010: 39, 135).

Many researchers have focused on finding out which attributes or information sources are the most efficient ones in country branding and image formation. Beerli and Martin (2004: 667) have discovered that gender, age, level of education, social class and country of origin can all affect the image formation, although Baloglu and McCleary (1999: 893) have noted that their effect is not as significant as the effect of external factors such as type and variety of information sources. Anholt (2003: 133) notes that negative events are longer lasting in memory than positive, which is also an aspect that makes image management so challenging. However, there are some identified channels, which researchers and country branding organizations wish to utilize in order to make an impact. Primary sources are naturally very powerful as the perceptions from a firsthand visit may be more diverse and realistic (Beerli and Martin 2004: 662, 664). It has even been shown that previous visitations to a country increase favorability of the country, even if the visitation was not positive (Anholt 2010: 89). Out of secondary sources, word-of-mouth is perceived as having a powerful impact on the country image (Baloglu and McCleary 1999: 892; Moilanen and Rainisto 2009: 15). Stokburger-Sauer (2011, 1287) found out in her study that strong identification to a country's brand and personality increases willingness to visit and revisit the country, as well as recommend it to others.

Pike and Ryan (2004: 334) state that the main goal of any branding strategy is to “reinforce positive images already held by the target audience, correct negative images, or create a new image”. There are however numerous ways to achieve these targets. A lot of country branding literature has focused on looking into case studies of different countries' strategies, from which good practices can be learnt from. From these good practices, an often-mentioned advice is to acknowledge that country image management does not equal to an advertising campaign – it is a much wider, comprehensive and longer-lasting process (Country Brand Delegation 2010: 263). Moilanen and Rainisto (2008: 8) have estimated the image creation process to often take even 10-20 years, which is almost a length of a generation.

Common mistakes and recipes for failure that writers have listed regarding country image management include too vague and irrelevant messages, the lack of distinguishing elements from the competitors, lack of coordination within the different country branding organizations and lack of sustainability and strategical thinking, especially in the political frame where governments only have a few years' time of term to benefit their agenda (Lindroos et al. 2005: 36-38; Moilanen and Rainisto 2008: 55-56; Anholt 2010: 47). Also, the lack of complexity is seen as a threat, as it makes the country image more vulnerable to negative publicity (Anholt 2010: 136). However, a good communications message is said to contain elements that the target audience finds meaningful, but also even more importantly elements that distinguish the branded object from its competitors (Laakso 2003: 83; Moilanen and Rainisto 2008: 24; Olins 2003 cit Hytönen 2012: 141). There are two categories of differentiation: uniqueness (competitors do not have the same attribute) and superiority (competitors have the attribute but are inferior) (Romaniuk and Gaillard 2007: 269). The message also has to be believable and acceptable to the message receiver, otherwise the message loses its credibility and will not be taken seriously (Laakso 2003: 112). Successful country image management is seen as a positive cycle where the country assists the positive images of its brands and products, and the branded products further the positive perceptions of the country (Anholt 2003: 134).

## **2.2 Why should we care about country image**

*“Marketing teaches us that people are just as often guided by their perceptions of things as by the reality of things. Good marketers know that being in possession of the truth is not sufficient – people still need to be persuaded that it’s the truth.”* (Anholt 2003: 12)

All information and emotions are processed in the human mind through images (Lindroos et al. 2005: 18). In today’s world, amidst the accelerating digitalization, the amount of information in this world is increasing rapidly. Therefore, images help us to structure, organize and, most of all, notice the world around us amidst the information

overload of countless and even chaotic mess of different attractors of attention (Lindroos et al. 2005: 18, 22). Also, globalization and the similar ways of life it brings to various locations has accelerated the need for places – were it cities, regions or countries – to distinguish and differentiate themselves from the others with distinct images in order to catch the attention in the information overflow (Neacsu et al. 2016: 951).

The core and critical condition for creating place or country images is communications: in order to be able to convey a distinct target image is crucial (Hytönen 2012: 130; Ulkoministeriö 2016). Communications is supposed to influence knowledge, opinions and finally the decisions of the target audience (Ulkoministeriö 2016). But it must also be noted that active communications is not the only messaging channel. Everything, where the country is visible, were it for example its products and enterprises, international relations and politics, culture or citizens, contribute to the overall image of the country abroad (Ritchie and Crouch 2003 cit. Foroudi et al. 2016: 244).

Country images are seen as important because they are the core to the attitudes towards a country, and the effects of this can trickle down indirectly to many sectors. Anholt (2010: 146) states that the “images of other countries form the background to our world view rather than being objects of direct observation or conscious appraisal”. All small details and perceptions on different elements comprise the overall reputation of a country (Country Brand Delegation 2010: 253). Countries with a positive reputation are more likely to have their messages heard and appreciated than if they had a neutral or negative reputation (Hytönen 2012: 120; Anholt 2010: 23).

The reason why various decision-makers have become willing to try to brand their country is explained with the same as why product branding became common (Hytönen 2012: 111). These reasons refer to the changes in society and its structures, including the developments in logistics, ICT technology, industrialization, urbanization and the changes in the behaviors of consumers. Hytönen (2012: 116) also found out in her research that country branding professionals see that the increased influence of economy (over politics) in international relations has resulted in the need of country branding.

While before the state might have been seen as a producer of welfare services such as healthcare and education for its citizens, nowadays welfare is understood as competitiveness and successful enterprises, thus creating a pressure for the state to facilitate these opportunities (Hytönen 2012: 20, 109). Moreover, success stories from elsewhere attracts for the others to try and copy the idea to brand the country in order to achieve the same results (Hytönen 2012: 111).

One big factor that scholars mention as reasons for country branding is the global competition between countries (e.g. Foroudi et al. 2016: 244; de San Eugenio Vela 2013: 467; Moilanen and Rainisto 2009: 8-10; Anholt 2007: 19). Countries compete on having their exports sold abroad, incoming tourists, talented workforce, foreign investments as well as attention and political dominance (Swedish Institute 2017; Van Ham 2001: 2-3; Moilanen and Rainisto 2009: 8-10). Above all, countries compete on influencing the decisions people make (Country Brand Delegation 2010: 25). Country image affects the decisions made by individual consumers, travelers, wholesale buyers, potential investors and many others (Moilanen and Rainisto 2008: 87). In this global competition it is important for the countries to be able to differentiate themselves from the others, to have a unique and individual identity of their own (de San Eugenio Vela 2013: 467; Hytönen 2012: 39; Moilanen and Rainisto 2009: 8-10). Therefore, trying to convey the place identity – the attempt to brand – is seen as an answer to this need. In the global competition, a positive country image is seen to protect the country from criticism as the tolerance and faith of consumers is higher for these countries (Murphy 1992 cit Hytönen 2012: 138).

Many scholars and writers have listed a vast number of advantages that successful country branding and a positive country image is expected to bring, many of which are economic benefits. Country with a positive image gains more trust and credibility among other countries in many aspects. Anholt (2003: 1) calls it a ‘multiplier of value’. The country may gain more visibility or a “greater profile in the international media”, which directly affects to the country’s promotion messages for investments and tourism becoming more noticed (Anholt 2007: 29). Appealing countries attract more visitors,

workforce, trade and investments (Moilanen and Rainisto 2009: 11; Moilanen and Rainisto 2008: 7, 19; Swedish Institute 2017). The appealing country's economy becomes stronger as its country-of-origin effect will more likely increase the exports of products, and the country will be more successful in attracting more inbound investments and tourists (Moilanen and Rainisto 2008, 87, 7, 19; Temporal 2001 cit. Anholt 2003: 146; Anholt 2007: 28-29; Balabanis et al. 2001 cit. Stokburger-Sauer 2011: 1282).

Researchers (e.g. Hytönen 2012: 30; Morgan et al 2003 cit. Stokburger-Sauer 2011,1282) remind that the benefits of a positive country image are not only limited to the economic sphere but can also give political advantages in international affairs. Hytönen (2012: 41) explains that country branding as a strategic activity aims to particularly secure and improve the country's position and influence in the sphere of international relations. A country with a positive image will find it easier to establish stable relations with others and give it more influence and credibility when acting in international organizations (Hytönen 2012: 123; Anholt 2007: 29; Moilanen and Rainisto 2008, 7, 19). Vice versa, political activities also influence the image and perception of a country, and especially political conflicts can harm the country image, which then can affect for example inbound tourism (Alvarez and Campo 2014: 76).

A strong country image is said to enhance the national identity within the inhabitants of the country (Moilanen and Rainisto 2009: 29; Anholt 2007: 28-29). As nations and their collective identities are social constructs (Anderson 2006: 6), a representation of the place identity – the story the country tells of itself to the outside world – can support, clarify and complement the national identity of the people inside the country. Country branding can be seen as a way of internal communications to its inhabitants to maintain identity and loyalty (van Ham 2008: 132). It is clear that a strong national identity can create a strong country image, but likewise a strong country image can strengthen national identity and increase confidence (Hytönen 2012: 190-191). And when confidence is high, it can enable more effectively new economic opportunities and partnerships (Swedish Institute 2017). Not only is country branding a competition

between the images of different countries, but also a power struggle between the different actors who brand and communicate the target image, as in who gets to decide what aspects are communicated and which ones are ignored (Hytönen 2012: 44, 57).

In summary, economic, political and social benefits are seen as positive effects of country branding (Hytönen 2012: 121). On the other hand, challenges include the fear of negative images and the difficulty to correct them, vagueness, high costs and the risk of failure in branding (Hytönen 2012: 143). A negative image makes it harder for positive messages to be heard and believed, and it is more time- and resource-consuming to brand countries with a negative image than just a weak image (Avraham 2009 and Youde 2009 cit. Hytönen 2012: 154). Despite the perceived challenges of country branding, it is generally seen that the numerous benefits exceed these challenges, which makes attempts for country branding worthwhile.

### **2.3 Measuring and elements of country image**

As pointed out in the previous subchapter, country images have an economic, a political and a socio-cultural aspect. These different aspects represent different elements that country branding and country images hold, for example exports, governance, culture, demographics, tourism, investments and migration (Hytönen 2012: 45). This subchapter looks into how different researchers have aimed to deconstruct the concept of country image into different elements, as well as how these elements can be operationalized and measured.

Deconstructing the concept of country image can be done in several ways, according to which of the previously in subchapter 2.1 mentioned theoretical framework traditions one chooses to follow. In the field of tourism and destination images, numerous researchers (e.g. Baloglu and McCleary 1999; Beerli and Martin 2004; Alvarez and Campo 2014 2014) have talked of the image being constructed from cognitive, affective, and conative evaluations.



Cognitive evaluations refer to associations that are based on the person's awareness, knowledge and beliefs about the branded object (Pike and Ryan 2004: 334). Cognitive evaluations are influenced by the person's sociodemographic characteristics – such as age or education – and the amount or type of information sources (Baloglu and McCleary 1999: 890; Beerli and Martin 2004: 663-664, 674).

Affective evaluations, on the other hand, are the evaluator's feelings or emotions towards the branded object (Baloglu and McCleary 1999: 870; Beerli and Martin 2004: 658). Affective evaluations can be favorable, unfavorable or neutral (Fishbein 1967 cit. Pike and Ryan 2004: 334). It is generally perceived that cognitive and affective evaluations have a strong connection, as knowledge (cognitive elements) works as a basis for attitudes and feelings (affective evaluations) (Baloglu and McCleary 1999: 873; Beerli and Martin 2004: 658). According to research, marketing and information sources do not influence the affective evaluations in the ways it does for cognitive evaluations (Woodside and Lysonski 1989 cit. Baloglu and McCleary 1999: 874), as affective evaluations are affected by more personal components such as motivation (Beerli and Martin 2004: 677). After the cognitive and affective evaluations of a place the consumer makes a choice on the likelihood of visiting the destination, which is called conative evaluation (Pike and Ryan 2004: 334-335; Alvarez and Campo 2014: 71).

All these factors then together form the overall image, which summarizes the positivity or negativity of the image (Baloglu and McCleary 1999: 873; Beerli and Martin 2004: 658; Alvarez and Campo 2014 2014: 71). With well-known and developed places, the cognitive evaluations have a great influence on the overall image, whereas with less known places that have not been visited previously or possess a negative prior image, affective evaluations have a greater weight in influencing the overall image (Alvarez and Campo 2014: 71).

A frequently cited researcher in product branding theory and its conceptualization is Kevin Lane Keller (1993), and his remarks are well implementable also on country branding and country images. Keller (1993: 3) notes that “the relevant dimensions that

distinguish brand knowledge and affect consumer response are the awareness of the brand (in terms of brand recall and recognition) and the favorability, strength, and uniqueness of the brand associations in consumer memory” (image 1).

## KELLER’S DIMENSIONS OF BRAND KNOWLEDGE

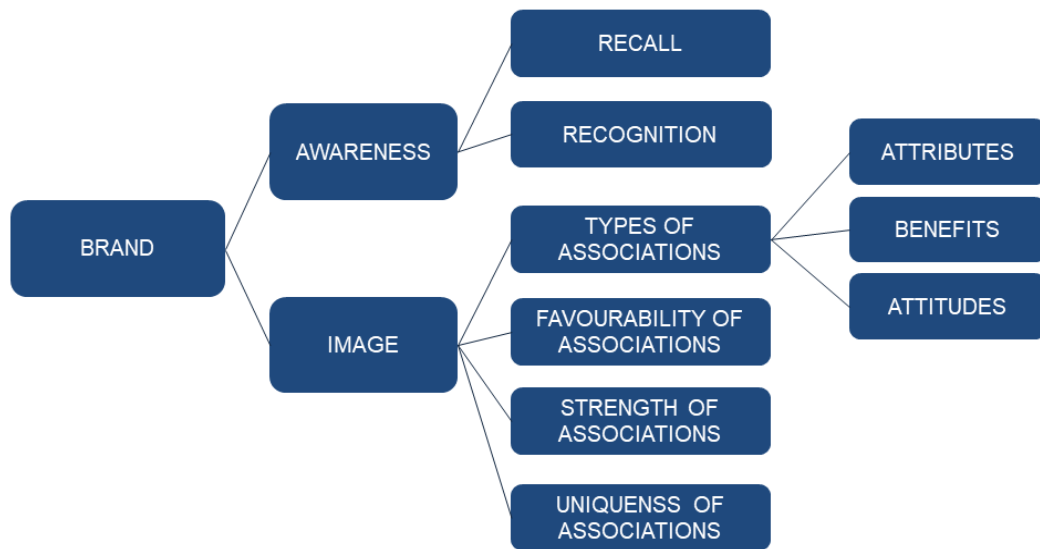


Image 1. Dimensions of brands that can also be used in the context of country branding and country images. Source: Keller 1993: 7.

The existence of a brand or an image starts from the fact that the consumer is aware or remembers of ever having heard of or seen the branded object before (Keller 1993: 3; Laakso 2003: 125). According to Aaker (1996: 114-115), the different levels of awareness increase from recognition, recall, top-of-mind (first recalled), dominance (only recalled) to having knowledge and lastly an opinion of the brand. Keller (1993: 3) divides awareness into recall and recognition. Brand recognition stands for that if the name of the brand is given to the consumer, he is able to say whether he has seen or heard it before. Brand recall means that the consumer can name the brand by himself when asked to name different brands from a certain product category. Stepchenkova and Shichkova (2016: 4) define awareness as the strength and amount of activated memories that the consumer can recall when using the branded object as a cue. It refers to the ability to give the first unaided associations, “as these responses represent the most

salient associations in the consumer mind that are connected” to the branded object (Stepchenkova and Shichkova 2016: 4).

Brand awareness influences the brand image a consumer has (Keller 1993: 3). According to Keller (1993: 2-3), the brand image is “the set of associations linked to the brand that consumers hold in memory” and constitute the brand equity. Keller (1993: 4) mentions that these associations can be categorized into attributes, benefits and attitudes, according to how much summarized information of the branded object the association holds within. Attribute describes what the consumer perceives the branded object to be or have, whereas benefits refers to personal opinions on how the consumer values the branded object and thinks it can provide him or her. Attitude, on the other hand, is seen as a consumer’s ‘overall evaluation’ of the branded object. (Keller 1993: 4.)

In addition to categorizing the types of image associations, these associations can also be described in how favorable, strong or unique they are (Keller 1993: 3, 7). Favorability refers to when the consumer perceives the branded object to have qualities that create a positive attitude towards it (Keller 1993: 5). It has also been shown (MacKenzie 1986 cit. Keller 1993: 5) that the favorability of attributes is connected with the perceived importance of these attributes, as “consumers are unlikely to view an attribute or benefit as very good or bad if they do not also consider it to be very important”. This nature of importance Keller calls attribute strength (Stepchenkova and Shichkova 2016: 4). Strength is connected to both the quality and quantity of the attributes in consumers’ minds. The fact how strongly the attribute is rooted in the individual consumer’s memory affects on how likely the attribute will pop into the consumer’s mind (Keller 1993: 5). Uniqueness of attributes refers to the perceived qualities that differentiate the branded object from the others (Keller 1993: 6; Stockburger-Sauer et al. 2012: 408; Stepchenkova and Shichkova 2016: 4). It is what gives the reason for consumers to choose this particular branded object over the others (Keller 1993: 6). Keller (1993: 6) notes that “[t]he presence of strongly held, favorably evaluated associations that are unique to the brand and imply superiority over other brands is critical to a brand’s success”.

The way Keller (1993: 12-14) measures these above-mentioned dimensions is based on having the consumer list free associations that come to mind when thinking of the branded object (Dolnicar and Grün 2012: 1). This operationalization has provided a methodological basis to many later researches, such as Stepchenkova and Shichkova's (2016) work.

From the associations that the respondents list, the favorability, strength and uniqueness of the image can be analyzed. The favorability can be measured for example through scores or other means of evaluations that the respondents give to the associations they have listed (Keller 1993: 14; Stepchenkova and Shichkova 2016: 6). Strength is indicated through the frequency or proportion of the particular association amidst all the associations (Stepchenkova and Shichkova 2016: 6). Uniqueness, then, can be measured by categorizing the associations that are unique to the branded object (Stepchenkova and Shichkova 2016: 6). This can be also done by comparing associations to the associations of competitors, or directly asking from the respondents what they see as unique in the branded object (Keller 1993: 13). Awareness can be analyzed so that recall can be measured through the respondent's ability to provide the asked amount of associations (Stepchenkova and Shichkova 2016: 6), and recognition through asking the respondent whether they have seen or heard of the branded object before (Keller 1993: 14).

Pike (2002: 542) has done a wide review on the different methodologies of research paper analyzing place images, covering 142 research papers during the years of 1973-2000, and has found many different ways to measure country image or the successfulness of a country branding strategy. Moilanen and Rainisto (2009: 13) point out that this can be done for example through following the year-to-year changes in awareness, market position or economic development. Countries also follow their publicity and media hits in foreign media as it affects awareness (Hytönen 2012: 183), an example of which are the yearly "Finland in the world media" reports (Ulkoministeriö 2017).

Researchers, such as Martínez and Alvarez (2010), have created questionnaire scales that include tools to measure cognitive and affective components for measuring country images. The combination of using Likert scale questions and open-ended questions has been widely used in country image research (Stepchenkova and Shichkova 2016: 5). Replacing an open-ended question of describing the country freely, that usually reveals the most importantly held and most widely spread images of the country, into a shorter version where only the top three images were asked for, has become a very popular method in country image research. This eases the input from the respondents, reduces the amount of collected data, and saves time and effort from the researcher in processing and analyzing the data (Stepchenkova and Shichkova 2016: 5).

One aspect of measuring country images and country branding are different indices created by private brand consultancy companies, that compare the country images of different countries (Hytönen 2012: 29). Two examples of these are the Anholt-CfK Nation Brand Index (NBI) by Simon Anholt partnering with CfK, and Country Brand Index (CBI) by FutureBrand. The Anholt-GfK Nation Brand Index, initially launched in 2005, measures annually the images and perceptions related to 50 countries through online interviews in 20 different panel countries (Country Brand Delegation 2010: 267; Finland Promotion Board 2017d). The countries' images are measured through six dimensions that are exports, governance, culture and heritage, people, tourism, and investment and immigration (GfK 2017). FutureBrand's Country Brand Index was also launched in 2005 (FutureBrand 2017). FutureBrand (2017b) itself states that the "Country Brand Index has historically studied perceptions of 118 countries around the world in the same way we measure consumer or corporate brands". Similarly, as with NBI, the CBI measures the images in various different dimensions varying from governance and infrastructure to culture, demographics and consumer behavior (Country Brand Delegation 2010: 277). It collects quantitative and qualitative data with questionnaires from international travelers of 17 different panel countries, and ranks the measured countries according to the perceptions in each dimension (FutureBrand 2014; FutureBrand 2017b).

### **3 Country branding and images of Finland and other Nordic countries**

This chapter looks into Finland's and other Nordic countries' branding strategies and prevailing country images. Subchapter 3.1 focuses into Finland's country branding strategy in general and actions specifically in China. After that, Sweden's, Norway's, Denmark's and Iceland's individual country branding efforts, as well as the joint Nordic branding strategy are examined. In the end of this chapter in subchapter 3.3, the hypotheses for this research will be formulated based on the literature reviews in chapters 2 and 3.

#### **3.1 Target image and branding messages of Finland**

It has been argued that the construction of the Finnish national image began early before Finland was even independent (Country Brand Delegation 2010: 293; Hytönen 2012: 62). At that time the national image and identity were constructed and represented for example through Finland's own national epic Kalevala and other forms of art, including visual arts and classical music composers. On the verge of Finland's independence, it is told that international reporters were invited to Finland and informed on the reasons Finland wanted to seek independence. This has been speculated to influence on the fact that Finland's attempts for independence were regarded favorably and therefore been interpreted as an act of constructing a branding message (Country Brand Delegation 2010: 35).

##### **3.1.1 Finland's country branding strategy**

The first official state-led project concerning Finland's country image can be seen to have begun in the 1960s, when the first work groups were established to evaluate Finland's external image. In 1972, the Coordination Committee for Communications Abroad (Ulkomaantiedotuksen koordinaatiotyöryhmä) was established to administer Finland's communications abroad (Hytönen 2012: 62-63; Clerc 2014: 181-182; Finland Promotion Board 2017c: 16). In 2006 the Committee became a part of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland and was renamed as the Finland Promotion Board (FPB) (Hytönen 2012: 64). In 2007 the FPB commenced the compiling of a country branding policy program that would include a proposal for the actions, stages and a timeline of a country

brand strategy, which was published in 2008 by Teemu Moilanen and Seppo Rainisto (Moilanen and Rainisto 2008: 7). In 2008 Alexander Stubb, the Foreign Minister of Finland of the time, appointed a new high-level delegation, the Country Brand Delegation, to analyze Finland's country image around the world and to develop an action plan for developing a country brand that would benefit Finland's recognizability and competitiveness internationally (Hakala et al 2013: 538-539; Hytönen 2012: 64-65). The delegation was active during the years 2008-2010 and published a final report in 2010 (Country Brand Delegation 2010; Hytönen 2012: 65). The final report included a depiction of a target image of how the Delegation would like the world to perceive Finland as well as concrete suggestions on an action plan how Finland could achieve this.

There are many state-led stakeholders, which work and support Finland's country branding work abroad. In addition to the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, the Ministry for Economic Affairs and Employment as well as the Ministry of Education and Culture, different actors include organizations such as Business Finland, Finnvera, Finnfund, Finnpartnership, The Finnish Cultural and Academic Institutes Association, Finnish Industry Investment Ltd, the Finnish-Russian Chamber of Commerce, the Finnish-Swedish Chamber of Commerce, the regional Centres for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment (ELY Centers), the Finnish Patent and Registration Office (PRH) and VTT Technical Research Centre Ltd (Team Finland 2018). The idea of bringing the isolated country branding organizations closer together developed into the establishment of Team Finland. In 2012, a new department was established in the Prime Minister's Office – the External Economic Relations Unit – to work as a secretariat to Team Finland and harmonize the operations of different member organizations (Team Finland 2017).

What must be noted is that coordinating the country branding of Finland is just one aspect of what Team Finland does: the tasks are broader and extend to the areas of trade and export promotion. This perhaps underlines the meaning of economic factors in Finland's country branding strategy. Team Finland offers internationalization services through advice and trainings for companies, provides information about international

opportunities and risks, finances companies' innovation and internationalization projects, organizes delegation visits, trade missions and events to support networking and visibility of the companies in the target markets, as well as provides governmental representation and support when needed (Prime Minister's Office 2014: 13).

Team Finland's thematic priorities are to promote Finnish knowhow especially in the industries of cleantech, bioeconomy, ICT and digitalization, life sciences (including healthcare and food), creative industries, education, and Arctic competence (Prime Minister's Office 2014: 15). Finland Promotion Board, which specifically focuses on Finland's country brand communications and producing country branding materials for all the organizations of Team Finland, works as a part of Team Finland (Team Finland 2017b; 2017c).

The official country image website of Finland is the This Is FINLAND website (Team Finland 2017b). It contains a variety of Finland-related statistics, facts and articles in eight different languages, which are English, Chinese, German, Spanish, French, Portuguese, Russian and Arabic (This is Finland 2017). This correlates with the fact that the focal target regions of Finland's country brand work in 2016-18 are China, Egypt, France, Germany, Great Britain, India, Japan, Mexico, Poland, Russia, South Korea, Turkey and the United States (Ulkoministeriö 2016). Other communications media for centralized country brand work include the This Is FINLAND Magazine, as well as This Is FINLAND's social media channels in Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, Vkontakte, Weibo and Wechat (Ulkoministeriö 2016). The Ministry for Foreign Affairs also organizes the This Is FINLAND Foreign Correspondents' Program, which is a 3-4-week long study program about Finland for foreign reporters from all around the world (Ulkoministeriö 2016).

Under the This Is FINLAND website, there are also two material banks, the Finland Image Bank and the Finland Toolbox, which are free to use for anyone if in "need to spread the good word about Finland" (Finland Toolbox 2017). The Finland Toolbox includes various Finland related materials, such as research and infographics on Finland,



posters and e-publications of the This is FINLAND Magazines. There are also document templates and guidelines for using the country's official "Suomi Finland Visual Identity", which contains the official logo, colors and fonts (Finland Toolbox 2017).

Part of the country branding communications, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland launched a Finland emoji collection in 2015, which was supplemented also in 2016 and 2017, now consisting a total of 56 emojis. The emojis received wide publicity abroad through various awards and written articles, with a total reached audience of around 200 million people by the end of 2016. (Finland Promotion Board 2017c: 21.) Also, the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Finland's independence in 2017 and the visibility it brought was utilized in Finland's country branding communications in various events all around the world (Finland Promotion Board 2017c: 23-24).

According to Finland Promotion Board (2017c: 6), major factors in the turn of the millennium that have influenced Finland's country image globally include Nokia and Finland's membership in the EU. It also names Finland's development in to a Nordic welfare state as an influencing factor. The Nordic welfare model, good governance and a functional business environment are listed as some of Finland's strengths. Weaknesses on the other hand include the country's small population and "consequent limited resources for spreading the message". (Finland Promotion Board 2017c: 13.) Following the concept of awareness in brand theories, Finland Promotion Board sets three objectives for Finland's country image work (Finland Promotion Board 2017c: 5):

1. To make Finland visible abroad (awareness-raising)
2. To highlight Finland's strengths (opinion-shaping), and
3. Choose Finland (decision-making).

In its final report in 2010, the Country Brand Delegation (2010: 5, 353) chose "Finland and Finns as problem solvers" as its main message of the target image. Areas of success where Finland can and should show its problem-solving skills are functionality, nature and education, which are also the three core features of the Delegation's target image for Finland (Country Brand Delegation 2010: 21). The three key strengths for the Finnish

country brand are suggested to be 1) environment and sustainable development, 2) education and welfare, and 3) culture and creative industries (Country Brand Delegation 2010: 347; Finland Promotion Board 2017: 1; 2017b: 3-4). In Team Finland Strategy Update 2015, the three key themes used for Finland to differentiate itself were “cleanliness (incl. cleantech, quality of living, a well-functioning society, the Arctic, nature), design (products, services, cross-sectoral) and education and competence (incl. start-up companies)” (Prime Minister’s Office 2014: 26). The strategy also states that instead of trying to appeal to everyone, Finland’s country branding communications focuses on specific target audiences (Prime Minister’s Office 2014: 26).

Hytönen (2012) conducted many interviews in her research with numerous experts involved in Finland’s country branding work, and the conclusions were very similar to the abovementioned elements. A clean nature, security and political stability, highly educated population and a functional infrastructure – amongst many others – were seen as good examples of Finland’s strengths (Hytönen 2012: 140). The main focal points of marketing messages mentioned in Hytönen’s interviews were related to the Finnish environment, technology, innovations, society and cultural characteristics. The Finnish environment and nature was seen as exotic, pure and cool, which all should according to the interviewees be emphasized when marketing Finland. Forests were also mentioned as an invaluable resource for both the industry sector as well as for individual citizens as personal outing experiences. Another aspect seen as important was technology, as Finland has proven its competency in environmental, mobile and electronics technology industries. This also relates to Finland’s innovatory nature, in both product development as well as in society. Finnish characteristics, such as reliability, pureness and punctuality were also seen as powerful messages that can be used in brand communications. Other society-related positive features mentioned in Hytönen’s interviews were high level of health care and education, political stability, welfare, equality and modernity. The aspect of tourism was also seen as a crucial part of constructing a country brand. Finland’s location in between Western Europe and Asia was seen as an advantage for air traffic and the country’s Northern location as favorable for winter and Christmas time tourism. (Hytönen 2012: 155-158.)

In international country brand comparison indices, Finland has done well considering its size. In FutureBrand's Country Brand Index, Finland was one of the measured countries for the first time in 2008, and it has since been named in the index as a safe travel destination and a country of high technology and environmentally friendly solutions (Country Brand Delegation 2010, 277). In 2016, Finland's ranking in the overall Anholt-GfK Nation Brands Index (NBI) was 17<sup>th</sup> (Finland Promotion Board 2017c: 7). During the years 2008-2016, Finland's ranking has stably remained as 17<sup>th</sup>, excluding the years 2008 and 2014, when Finland ranked as 18<sup>th</sup> (Finland Promotion Board 2017c: 7). Austria, which is sometimes used as a comparison country for Finland, ranked as 16<sup>th</sup> in 2016. Finland's best rankings were in the sectors of governance and export dimensions (8<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup>), and the lowest in culture and tourism (27<sup>th</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup>) (Finland Promotion Board 2017c: 7-8). It is pointed out, that in the rankings, about two thirds of the panel countries ranked Finland above average, implying the country's positive image (Country Brand Delegation 2010: 267). The closer the country is located to Finland, the more positively they perceived Finland (Country Brand Delegation 2010: 267).

### **3.1.2 Finland's country branding work and visibility in China**

In 2010, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland published a "China Action Plan", which stated a strong intention to strengthen relations between Finland and China. The plan included initiatives to strengthen cooperation and Finland's visibility in China within the political, trade-economical, environmental, cultural, educational, research, development policy, and law enforcement sectors (Ulkoasiainministeriö 2010: 16-21).

Team Finland has an active role in the state-led representing of Finland in China. Team Finland in China consists of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland (represented by the Finnish missions in Beijing, Shanghai and Hong Kong), Business Finland, the FinChi Innovation Center as well as the Finnish Business Councils located in Beijing, Shanghai, Hong Kong and Guangdong Province (Suomen suurlähetystö 2018).

At the official level, the inputs of the Finnish missions located in China create the basis of Finland's country brand work in China. This work includes various public diplomacy measures such as maintaining contacts to local partners and organizing events that promote Finland's expertise and knowhow. Naturally, all the country branding organizations in the Team Finland network are active in their own sectors and have their own marketing and communication channels (such as websites and personal contacts) to promote their own causes. This is why regular Team Finland meetings are held so that the marketing messages and conveyed images about Finland would be consistent to the message receivers. Finland Promotion Board (2017: 2) has named China along with 13 other countries as Ministry for Foreign Affairs's priority countries in country branding work in 2016-2018. This is visible from the efforts allocated for various country branding communications in Chinese in the This Is FINLAND's website, Weibo and Wechat accounts (Ulkoministeriö 2016).

In addition to conscious country branding communications by Finnish state-led organizations, visibility that influences perceptions and images of a country can be also gained for example through state visits and local media visibility. A good example of this was the Chinese President Xi Jinping's state visit to Finland in April 2017. Along with the news coverage over the state visit itself, there were vast reportages on Finland in general in Chinese newspapers and media, both online and offline. Reported news items included themes such as education, winter sports and travel opportunities in Lapland (Mäkeläinen 2017; Pajari 2017). The news, interviews, reports and commentaries related to the state visit were estimated to be read by tens or even hundreds of millions of readers across China within one week's time (Ulkoministeriö 2018: 43). Even if they are not as impactful as a state visit, it is also noteworthy is that the visits of Finnish ministers and other high-level ministry representatives to China promote and attract visibility for themes and causes in their own individual sectors of administration.

According to the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Finland's annual media review on the year 2016, one of the major elements of Finland's visibility in the Chinese media was Finland and Lapland as a travel destination, which was at least partly a result of Alibaba

Group's Alitrip launching the "Aurora" advertising campaign (Ulkoasiainministeriö 2017: 8, 34). Other areas of visibility according to the report included education and a rising interest in winter sports. In autumn 2015, Visit Finland with Ipsos Mori UK executed a Brand Tracking tourism survey in several different countries, including 200 respondents in China (Ipsos Mori UK 2016). Their survey on China's part revealed that attributes associated with Finland had many similarities with attributes associated with other Nordic countries, such as Sweden and Norway (Ipsos Mori UK 2016: 84). Most prevalent listed attributes associated with Finland included 'beautiful', 'Nordic', 'cold', 'Santa', 'Nokia', 'country' and 'thousand lakes' (Ipsos Mori UK 2016: 83).

### **3.2 Branding Sweden, Denmark, Norway, Iceland and the Nordics**

As we have seen, features of Nordicity are visible in the values and marketing messages Finland wishes to convey. This subchapter will briefly introduce the state-led country branding efforts made in Sweden, Norway, Denmark and Iceland, and see, if there are any traces or similarities in the messages that Finland wishes to represent. Lastly, section 3.2.5 will shortly look into the inter-parliamentary efforts that have been made to brand the Nordic region as a whole.

#### **3.2.1 Sweden**

The story of branding Sweden has been described as an example of a successful synergy between the state and corporate brands (Hytönen 2012: 238). Widely known corporate brands, such as IKEA or Volvo, have strong associations for being perceived as originating from Sweden, benefitting both Sweden as a country as well as the companies as Swedish brands. For comparison, Finland and Nokia's relationship is not as strong and visible as for the Swedish brands. It is also claimed that Sweden works as a symbol or an embodiment of the Nordic welfare states, through which the other Nordic countries are recognized as part of the group (Hytönen 2012: 238-239).

The Swedish country branding organizations in the branding network work in relatively equal and less hierarchical positions compared to many other countries (Brach 2010 cit.

Hytönen 2012: 239). One of the main organizations completely dedicated to studying the perceptions of Sweden and developing Sweden's country brand communications is the Swedish Institute (Svenska Institutet, SI) (Swedish Institute 2017b). Other organizations heavily participating on branding Sweden are the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Enterprise and Innovation, the Ministry of Culture, Business Sweden and Visit Sweden, which all together constitute the Council for the Promotion of Sweden (Nämnden för Sverigefrämjande i utlandet, NSU) (Swedish Institute 2017b). The Swedish Institute, Business Sweden and Visit Sweden are also members of Team Sweden, which focuses on Sweden's export promotion abroad (Regeringskansliet 2017; Swedish Institute 2017b).

The first large study on Sweden's country image in eight different target markets abroad – “Images of Sweden abroad: a study of the changes, the present situation and assessment methods” – was published by the NSU in 2005 (Ministry for Foreign Affairs Sweden 2005; Country Brand Delegation 2010: 285). Also, a yearly Sverige bilden report is published on perceptions of Sweden and its position in the global markets (Country Brand Delegation 2010: 285; Hytönen 2012: 239). The target image that Sweden wishes to convey of itself is a country that is “focused on development based on people's needs and environmental conditions” (Swedish Institute 2008: 6). For progressiveness, which works as the foundation of the target image, there are four core values that describe the Swedish society: innovative, open, authentic and caring (Swedish Institute 2008: 7; Country Brand Delegation 2010: 289). The Swedish Institute also maintains a material bank Sharing Sweden that consists of various materials and templates to support communicating the Swedish target image and identity to the world (Sharing Sweden 2017).

In 2016, the Swedish Institute published a report regarding Sweden's country image in China. The research was based on questionnaires, interviews and a wide qualitative and quantitative content analysis on internet discussions regarding Sweden on Chinese social media platforms (Svenska Institutet 2016: 2). According to the study, Sweden was mainly known as a welfare state with a high quality of life and for famous brands and

people, such as IKEA, Ericsson, Volvo, Alfred Nobel and football player Zlatan Ibrahimović (Svenska Institutet 2016: 1). Most common attributes associated with Sweden included ‘beautiful landscape’, ‘Stockholm’, ‘IKEA’, ‘Nobel’, ‘Nordic’ and ‘Volvo’ (Svenska Institutet 2016: 6). Some untrue attributes, such as Athens (pronunciations of Sweden and Athens in Chinese share similar syllables), Nokia and Swiss watches (pronunciations of Sweden and Switzerland in Chinese share similar syllables) were also associated with Sweden in the research (Svenska Institutet 2016: 6).

Sweden’s ranking in the Anholt-GfK Nation Brands Index (NBI) has long remained as 10<sup>th</sup> (Finland Promotion Board 2017c: 7).

### **3.2.2 Norway**

Norway’s country branding project in the end of the 1990s and early 2000s has been mentioned as a classic example of a failed case study (Moilanen and Rainisto 2008: 40; Moilanen and Rainisto 2009: 31; Hytönen 2012: 240). The project was commenced in 1998 with a funding of hundreds of millions of Norwegian Krone (Moilanen and Rainisto 2008: 40; Moilanen and Rainisto 2009: 31). The project included the Norwegian Tourism Board gathering 20 large tourism-related businesses, including hotel chains, ferry companies and an airline company, to support the vast campaign to develop Norway a country brand (Moilanen and Rainisto 2008: 40). The campaign commenced a market research on the perception of Norway in seven main target markets (Germany, Sweden, Denmark, France, Japan, Great Britain and the United States). The research project was the biggest yet to examine images and associations perceived about Norway and based on these results a working committee was appointed to develop Norway’s target image and corresponding marketing messages (Moilanen and Rainisto 2008: 41). After that, marketing campaigns were launched in the target markets with regional adjustments made according to the importance of the market to Norway. However, despite the huge efforts, the branding project received gradually increasing critique from the Norwegian public throughout the whole early 2000s. The criticism was directed at the project being an inefficient waste of money, and it grew in the end to be so strong, that the project was finally ceased in 2003 (Moilanen and Rainisto 2008: 42).

Many reasons have been suggested why the Norwegian country branding project failed. Firstly, the project has been criticized for including a relatively small number of parties in the development phase. Therefore, when the strategy, which was developed by a few 'insiders', was imposed on the majority others of the tourism industry, they did not feel the project and the campaign as their own, but as a dictated order (Moilanen and Rainisto 2008: 44-45; Moilanen and Rainisto 2009: 36-37). This made it hard to make the participants of the project and campaign committed to the cause. The marketing messages were also described as inconsistent: apparently the tourism industry was marketing the Norwegian summer as warm and pleasant when at the same time the fishing industry was advertising Norwegian fish as cold and fresh by displaying the Norwegian weather as harsh and cold all year round (Moilanen and Rainisto 2009: 37).

Another major issue that has been used to explain the project's failure was that the marketing messages were based on foreigners' perceptions of Norway and Norwegians abroad. This way, the perceptions of Norway and thus the marketing messages are not necessarily based on truth but rather more likely on stereotypes and misconceptions. Therefore, the brand messages are not clear and strong, as when the tourist who has certain expectations based on the brand marketing when visiting Norway, might in fact be disappointed when the reality does not correlate to what was being promised in the marketing campaigns. (Moilanen and Rainisto 2008: 45-46). Other mentioned reasons have been the excessive emphasis on tourism industry and disregarding that a country brand is a much wider concept, as well as the lack of stability in funding: the budget for the project was granted for one year at a time, which took a lot of yearly resources and time of the Tourism Board to secure funding for the next year (Moilanen and Rainisto 2008: 44-45).

Even though the particular branding project was ceased in 2003, it naturally did not mean that branding Norway altogether ceased (Moilanen and Rainisto 2008: 47). The approach taken in the first project may not have been a successful one, and in the next years after the ceasing of it Norway sought to organize in a different manner. Nowadays



the organization responsible for Norway's country branding work and trade promotion (including exports and tourism) is Innovation Norway, which works under the supervision of the Government of Norway and Ministry of Trade, Industry and Fisheries of Norway (Visit Norway 2017; 2017b). Innovation Norway's tasks include "promoting Norway as an attractive tourist destination", "promoting Norwegian enterprises", "securing development in rural areas", "enhancing innovation in Norwegian enterprises and industry", "building competitive Norwegian enterprises at both domestic and international markets", "transforming ideas into successful business cases", and "promot[ing] interaction between enterprises, knowledge communities and R&D institutions" (Visit Norway 2017b).

In 2016, Norway was not part of the measured countries in the Anholt-GfK Nation Brands Index (NBI) survey (GfK 2016).

### **3.2.3 Denmark**

The igniting spark for Denmark's awareness for country branding was the so-called Cartoon Crisis. The Cartoon Crisis was a world-wide known political conflict in late 2005 and early 2006, when satirical cartoons portraying Prophet Mohammed that were published in the Jyllands-Posten newspaper caused a scandal and upset numerous representatives from Muslim-majority countries. After the Prime Minister of Denmark refused to meet eleven ambassadors from these countries and apologize for the whole case, the incident escalated into a global crisis with numerous demonstrations in several Muslim countries and boycott of Danish products. Especially the dairy company Arla's sales suffered heavily from the incident. (Mordhorst 2015: 244-245).

Very soon the crisis and the negative publicity raised public discussions regarding Danish values and identity that the country wishes to convey to the world (Mordhorst 2015: 245). In spring 2006, the Danish government sought to establish a nation branding program, which would combine both political and corporate interests (Mordhorst 2015: 246-247). In 2007, this was followed with the official commencing of a nation branding program with a budget of over 400 million Danish Krone for a three-year time period

(Moilanen and Rainisto 2008: 153; Mordhorst 2015: 248; Hytönen 2012: 242). The program was dedicated to developing a distinct and positive image of Denmark, and it was focused in four areas of action: 1) Innovation and Creativity, 2) Tourism 3) Global Talents and 4) Export and Investments (Visit Denmark 2017).

In total four different ministries were in charge of the implementation of the program (Visit Denmark 2017). In addition to public diplomacy measures, Denmark's country branding work included various events and campaigns globally. The 2009 UN's Climate Conference in Copenhagen also gave an opportunity to represent Denmark as a clean, peaceful and innovative country (Moilanen and Rainisto 2008: 153).

The branding website of Denmark is BrandDenmark website, which is provided by Visit Denmark (BrandDenmark 2017). Denmark's brand promise is "Come and be part of it", and the brand identity relies on three core values: equality, creativity and variety (BrandDenmark 2017b; 2017c). Nordicity and the welfare state also play central parts in the Danish brand identity (Hytönen 2012: 242).

In 2016, Denmark's ranking in the Anholt-GfK Nation Brands Index (NBI) was 13<sup>th</sup> (Finland Promotion Board 2017d: 5).

### **3.2.4 Iceland**

The Iceland Naturally campaign started in 1999 can be seen as an opening for the efforts of branding Iceland (Moilanen and Rainisto 2008: 160; Huijbens 2011: 558). The campaign was originally aimed to increase awareness of Icelandic products in the United States, but in 2006 the project had already expanded to include Europe as well (Huijbens 2011: 558). In 2006, in order to react to some unfavorable publicity of Icelandic banks and the whaling industry, the Iceland Chamber of Commerce hired the country branding consultant Simon Anholt as an advisor for constructing the country image and brand of Iceland (Huijbens 2011: 560). In 2007 the Office of the Prime Minister of Iceland appointed a task force to study perceptions on Iceland (Huijbens 2011: 560). In its report

in 2008, the task force concludes three core principles for Iceland's brand: power freedom and peace (including safeness, welfare and nature) (Huijbens 2011: 563).

Nowadays the organization dedicated to upkeep and enhance Iceland's country image and brand is Promote Iceland (Promote Iceland 2017). This public-private partnership is in charge of Iceland's tourism and export promotion, and its member organizations include actors such as Visit Iceland and Invest in Iceland (Promote Iceland 2017).

In 2016, Iceland was not part of the measured countries in the Anholt-GfK Nation Brands Index (NBI) survey (GfK 2016).

### **3.2.5 Branding the Nordic**

In addition to each country's own national country branding programs, there is a high-level initiative to a common regional branding strategy of the Nordic region as a whole. One named reason for that is that in many places – especially geographically far away places – the Nordic region as a whole is perceived as a singular block (Nordic Council of Ministers 2015: 8).

*“The outside world essentially defines the Nordic region as a unit. The image is positive, largely because we in the Nordic region seem to have found solutions to economic and political challenges that both we and others are grappling with. The Nordic Model has become a concept. - - Competition for a place on the international arena is tough, and small countries like ours can work together to generate greater visibility and influence. Coordinated branding activities in a joint initiative can generate synergies in the public and/or private sectors in each country.”*

(Nordic Council of Ministers 2015: 9)

*“The greater the distance from the Nordic region, the less is known about each Nordic country. This makes the Nordic region a more relevant concept, and join Nordic initiatives will produce greater benefit.”*

(Nordic Council of Ministers 2015: 19)

For a long time, the concept of societies' Nordic model and social welfare has been a popular aspect of the region's visibility in foreign countries (Browning 2007: 1; Nordic Council of Ministers 2015: 8). The Nordic region has traditionally been perceived to possess "strong social cohesion and solidarity" (Harvard and Stadius 2013: 320). Also, gender equality, security and a good way of life are characteristics that have long defined descriptions of the Nordic countries, both inside and outside the region (Harvard and Stadius 2013: 326). Browning (2007: 18) states, that "the Nordic brand [is] ultimately being about what it is to be a 'good state'."

In 2015, the Nordic co-operation (Norden) – the regional inter-parliamentary collaboration organization of Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden – launched a Strategy for International Branding of the Nordic Region 2015-2018 (Nordic Council of Ministers 2015). Before the formulation of the branding strategy, a pilot study in the form of interviews was carried out in the winter of 2013-2014, which revealed that the prevailing image of the Nordic region is positive, and identified various common brand messages for the region, including art and culture, environment and sustainability, innovation, design and technology, as well as human rights, gender equality and children's well-being (Magnus 2016: 196).

The Strategy for International Branding of the Nordic Region 2015-2018 aims to illustrate an identity for the Nordic region and demonstrate, what the Nordic Region can offer to the world. The strategy sets a vision – "Together We Are Stronger" – which is targeted on four themes: freedom of movement, innovation, visibility and international engagement (Nordic Council of Ministers 2015: 7). The strategic guidelines are set for the time period 2015-2018, after which the project's results will be analyzed, followed, and developed further. The Nordic co-operation talks about the Nordic identity as the "Nordic Perspective", which has five strengths that the Nordic region should communicate:

1. "Openness and a belief in everyone's right to express their opinions.

2. Trust in each other and also, because of proximity to power, trust in leaders in society.
  3. Compassion, tolerance, and conviction about the equal value of all people.
  4. Sustainable management of the environment and development of natural resources.
  5. New ways of thinking, with focus on creativity and innovations.”
- (Nordic Council of Ministers 2015: 15)

Background factors for the common “Nordic Perspective” include similarities in geography (e.g. sparse populations, surrounded by sea, dark winters and severe climates), society (e.g. social safety, welfare services, high and equal standard of living, gender equality), history (e.g. over 200 years of peace between the Nordic countries, long traditions of collaboration in the region, long traditions of focusing on innovations and entrepreneurship), and culture (e.g. creative industries, Nordic design, nature’s presence in art and architecture) (Nordic Council of Ministers 2015: 11). These similarities are also used in the common brand message that the Nordic region wishes to tell of itself. To help the communications, the Nordic Council of Ministers initiated a The Nordics brand tool box, which includes various materials for stakeholders to use in branding communications (The Nordics 2018).

The branding strategy has allocated geographic priorities. In addition to the neighboring countries such as the Baltic Sea area and the European Union, also in more distant places, such as the USA, Canada, and BRICS countries (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa) are the target regions (Nordic Council of Ministers 2015: 19). The branding strategy utilizes a central budget allocated by the Nordic Council of Ministers, and the targets of the strategy are to create visibility and knowledge of the Nordic region and carry out joint activities (Nordic Council of Ministers 2015: 21). By March 2018, the Nordic branding project had already initiated 51 different events in 25 countries globally (Nordic Council 2018).

In addition to only looking at the joint efforts for branding the Nordic region, the target images of the five individual countries have multiple similarities. As all the countries wish to distinguish themselves as unique and intriguing, the countries have similar ideal values, for example the significance of nature. Finland, Sweden and Denmark have great emphases on modernity, innovations and creativity. Moreover, especially Finland, Sweden and Denmark seem to highlight features that are commonly thought as Nordic, such as Northern location and services provided by a welfare state.

In a sense, Nordic features and attributes are seen as so positive and worthwhile expressing, that it has created the inter-parliamentary efforts to brand Nordic as a region by the Nordic Council of Ministers. The synergy of combining the branding efforts of five small countries may give the region more visibility and recognizability in the world, and the respective countries believe it will benefit branding efforts of all the individual countries. What becomes a challenge, however, is that how to distinguish oneself from the other Nordic countries, who are seen as very similar to each other. For example, one of the biggest challenges for Finland according to Finland Promotion Board (2017c: 12) is Finland is hard to differentiate from the other Nordic countries.

### **3.3 Hypotheses**

Based on the literature reviews in chapters 2 and 3, including Keller's (1993) model of brand knowledge dimensions as well as Finland's and the Nordic regions target images, two hypotheses were formulated regarding brand uniqueness. These hypotheses will be tested in this research paper.

#### *Hypothesis H1*

The closer to Finland the one has travelled, the more likely the country image is based on uniquely Finnish attributes.

#### *Hypothesis H2*

The more one bases Finland's country image on uniquely Finnish attributes, the more likely he or she is prefers traveling to Finland over other Nordic countries.

The conceptualization and operationalization of the hypotheses are explained more in detail in Appendix I.

## **4 Materials and methodology: Survey**

Based on previous research and other source materials explored in the literature review section, an online survey was chosen as an appropriate research method to approach the research questions and hypotheses. Compared to for example paper or telephone interview surveys, an online survey's advantages are its low-maintenance costs as well as being able to reach a large number of respondents in a relatively short time. The survey (Appendix III) was conducted in cooperation with the Department for Communications of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland. The survey was designed to comprise questions regarding a much larger area than this thesis discusses, as the response data of the survey was expected to provide diverse and valuable data to support the Ministry's and other Finnish organizations' country brand work in China.

The data for this research paper was gathered from the survey questions QS1-QS4, Q1-Q3 and Q5-Q7, and these questions will be introduced and justified more in detail in this chapter. The analysis of the data for this research included both quantitative and qualitative approaches. This chapter will explain step by step how the survey was conducted and what methods were used to carry out the data analysis and hypothesis testing.

### **4.1 Sampling and sample size**

The focus of the survey was intended to look into Finland's country image in China from especially the perspective of trade promotion. With this in mind, the population of interest for this research was defined as the highly educated Chinese working middle class living in big 1<sup>st</sup> tier and 2<sup>nd</sup> tier Chinese cities. This is because the working-aged middle class is a large volume of highly educated people who have the potential to work

in positions with opportunities to influence on decisions that might influence the business of Finnish enterprises in China, Chinese foreign direct investments to Finland, or increasing incoming tourism to Finland. University students aiming for a bachelor's degree or higher were also included in the target populations of the survey, as they are seen as potential to become members of the survey's population of interest in the next few years. Likewise, retired and the soon-to-be retired individuals were excluded from the target population, as they are seen as not to fit the population of interest in the next few years. Table 1 shows the criteria for quotas set for the target population of the survey more in detail.

Table 1. Criteria for quotas set for the target population of the research

Geography	Beijing, Shanghai, Hong Kong (Finnish missions in all three cities) +3 other greater cities chosen according to size, economic growth and wealth): Chongqing, Wuhan and Guangzhou (2 of the cities are Finnair destinations, one non-destination was chosen as a comparison)
Age	20-50 years old (in China the retirement ages are about 50-55 for women, for men about 60; including retired and soon to be retired individuals wasn't seen as needed to be included in the target population)
Education	University graduates or soon-to-be graduates (Bachelor or higher)
Income	5,000 RMB/month or more (based on consulting company McKinsey's report ,where the income range of the Chinese middle class was defined as 60,000-229,000 RMB/year (Barton et al. 2013))

As the population of interest consists of hundreds of millions of individuals, conducting a complete enumeration survey would practically be impossible. Also, due to having no access to any population registers of any sort, using probability sampling methods was also not possible. The survey was wished to also reach respondents, who have no previous visitation experience or other connections to Finland, and therefore survey distribution channels such as the social media channels of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland or Visit Finland were not seen as suitable for this research. In order to tackle this challenge and other possible biases encountered in survey construction and



distribution, an outsourced market research company – Survey Sampling International (SSI) – was hired to assist in the survey design and conduct the questionnaire distribution. The non-probability sampling method chosen for the survey was a quota sampling that utilized SSI’s panel population. The amount of responses was set at 1,000 with quota targets according to city, gender and age, as well as eliminating screener criteria according to education and income (table 2).

Table 2. Quotas of the quota sampling frame defined by SSI.

Quota category	Quota	Quota size
City	Beijing	n=167
	Shanghai	n=167
	Hong Kong	n=167
	Guangzhou	n=167
	Chongqing	n=166
	Wuhan	n=166
Gender	Male	Minimum n=400
	Female	Minimum n=400
Age	20-29	Minimum n=250
	30-39	Minimum n=250
	40-50	Minimum n=250
Education	Bachelor	-
	Master	-
	Doctorate +	-
Income (per month) – Mainland China	5,000-7,499 RMB	-
	7,500-9,999 RMB	-
	10,000-14,999 RMB	-
	15,000-19,999 RMB	-
	20,000-24,999 RMB	-
	25,000-29,999 RMB	-
	30,000-34,999 RMB	-
	35,000+ RMB	-

## **4.2 Questionnaire form**

The questionnaire design was done in cooperation between multiple parties and adjusted in multiple stages. The first questionnaire draft was developed by the author and representatives from the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland, after which Survey Sampling International (SSI) modified the questionnaire form to correspond their company guidelines and customs. After the final version of the online questionnaire form – designed to take 10 minutes for the respondent to fill in – was approved by all parties, the English version was translated by the author into Chinese.

The Chinese questionnaire had two versions, one using the simplified Chinese script targeted for the respondents in Mainland China, and another one using the traditional Chinese script targeted for respondents in Hong Kong. The Chinese translation was language checked by a native Chinese speaker in the Embassy of Finland in Beijing. After the translations the Chinese versions were scripted to the SSI's online survey platform, and the Chinese surveys were pilot-tested in the Finnish missions in Beijing, Shanghai and Hong Kong.

The questionnaire form (Appendix III) consisted of a preliminary screener section (QS1-QS7), which surveyed the respondents' background variables as well as eliminated respondents that did not fit the quota criteria before moving on to the actual survey. The actual survey section consisted of 20 questions (Q1-Q16), including multiple choice questions, ranking questions, Likert scale questions, open-ended questions as well as a maximum difference scaling (Max-Diff) exercise.

The questionnaire was built so that the respondents were allowed to answer each question only once and were not given the option to return their previous responses. This was done in order to avoid biases in the responses as the survey would first ask about the Nordic region as a whole and later on focus the questions on Finland. This was done keeping in mind, as Stening and Zhang (2007: 130) state, that it is peculiar to China that there might exist a “strong belief that there is a ‘right’ answer to a question”. This so called acquiescence bias that can strongly bias responses was tried to take into account

by allowing the questions only to be answered once and also by including several different question types to the survey. Dolnicar and Grün (2012: 1) have observed that in previous country brand research questionnaires the use of Likert scale questions (mostly 5- or 7-scaled) have been very common. Likert scale questions were also included in this survey (e.g. Q7b) but were mostly aimed to be avoided. This is because Stening and Zhang (2007: 130) have observed that Likert scale questions might result in high volumes of “undecided categories” or otherwise biased responses. The acquiescence bias was tried to be tackled by focusing on opinion-based questions instead of knowledge-based questions and by adding open-ended questions, ranking questions and a separate maximum difference scaling exercise, which instead of allowing to rate all statements with high points forces the respondent to indicate his preferences on certain statements over the others (Cohen 2003: 4).

The questionnaire included both borrowing questions and statements from previous research as well as coming up with new questions to correspond the needs and interests in the field. In this research paper, we will focus only on the survey questions relevant to this study. Table 3 shows the relevant survey questions’ purposes and justifications in detail. Relevant questions for this research were Q1-Q3 and Q5-Q7. Table 3 does not introduce the screener section questions QS1-QS7, as they were perceived as rather standard questions screening the respondents’ background information such as gender, age, income level and work status. The relevant questions of the screener section can be found in appendix III.

Table 3. Survey question explanations.

	Question in English	Question type	References and justifications
Q1-Q3	Travel history	Multiple choice/open-ended	The three first questions of the survey measure the respondent’s travel history. According to the responses the respondents will be categorized into five categories: 1) travelled to Finland, 2) travelled to other Nordic Country, 3) travelled to other European Country, 4) travelled to other

country abroad, 5) never travelled abroad.

Previous research show that the more one has travelled the more aware and interested he will be towards other countries (Hakala et. al 2013: 548). The responses from these questions are used for the testing of H1.

Q5	“If money was not a concern, which of these Northern European countries would you be most interested in visiting?”	Ranking	The question asks for the respondent’s own personal opinion on which Nordic country does he finds the most attractive for travel. This statement was borrowed from The Anholt-GfK Roper Nations Brand Index 2016 Report (Finland Promotion Board 2017d: 21).
Q5b	“Why would you be most interested in visiting ...?”	Open-ended	Reasons for the choice in Q5 are also asked in the form of an open-ended question in order to prevent that selections made in Q5 are completely random. This question also provides insights on the respondents’ images on different Nordic countries, and the responses from Q5b will be utilized when testing hypotheses H1 and H2.
Q6	“Have you heard of Finland prior to taking this survey?”	Multiple choice	Question Q6 is used to measure the awareness of Finland among the respondents.
Q7	“When you hear the word “Finland”, what are the first three things that come to mind?”	Open-ended	The aim of Q7 is to inquire spontaneous associations and images that Finland raise amidst the respondents. Questions like Q7 asking to list spontaneous associations has been conducted in several previous country and destination brand researches (e.g. Ipsos Mori UK 2016; Stepchenkova and Shichkova 2016).
Q7b	“Please rate the three words you	Likert scale	Question Q7b aims to find out how positive or negative the spontaneous associations the

provided as  
positive, neutral, or  
negative.”

respondent mentions in Q7 are. An overall  
sum variable can be calculated from the three  
ratings in Q7b in order to evaluate overall  
spontaneous image positiveness. Question  
Q7b has been borrowed from Saraniemi and  
Komppula (2003) and Stepchenkova and  
Shichkova (2016), who have both in their  
surveys asked the interviewees to rate their  
spontaneous images as negative or positive.

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### **4.3 Data collection and analysis methods**

The 10-minute-long online questionnaire was launched by SSI on 17 January, 2017. The survey was targeted at SSI’s panel respondents in Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou, Chongqing, Wuhan, and Hong Kong. The survey’s screener section automatically eliminated respondents that did not meet the quota criteria set in table 1. The survey link was closed in 25 January, 2017 after 1,004 eligible respondents had filled in the questionnaire.

Both quantitative and qualitative methods were used in the analysis of the survey data. The qualitative responses from questions Q5b and Q7 were all read through and taken note of. The responses from Q7 were all translated from Chinese to English, and then categorized into 449 individual association categories. This method, the coding of open-ended responses into categories for further quantitative analysis, is called content analysis (Lavrakas 2008). After this the categories and the eligible responses were further categorized into whether they were ‘uniquely Finnish’, ‘Nordic’ or ‘not unique’. This was done by comparing the responses from Q7 to the responses in Q5b, as well as the different country branding strategies and the target images of the individual Nordic countries as well as a region as a whole. More of the conceptualization of uniqueness can be read from the table in Appendix I.

The respondents were categorized into whether they could provide at least one unique association, or if not then at least any Nordic associations, or whether all the provided eligible responses were non-unique. The respondents were also categorized based on the amount of illegible responses in the three spontaneous associations they were asked to provide in Q7. For the respondents who were able to provide three eligible responses, their ratings (on the scale 1-5) in Q7b for the three associations they had provided were used to create a new sum variable for the total rating of these spontaneous associations. Finally, all the respondents were once more categorized into five categories based on their travel experience.

After the categorization and formulation of new variables for the data, different sets of quantitative methods were used to observe and analyze the data. These methods were chosen based on the conceptualizations of Keller (1993: 14) and Stepchenkova and Shichkova (2016: 6). For measuring *awareness*, recognition was measured based on the responses for Q6. Recall was measured based on the missingness of responses in Q7, as well as on observing the frequencies of the newly created variable that categorized the respondents into whether they were able to provide three eligible responses for Q7. For *favorability*, the ratings of Q7b for each 449 association categories and key descriptive figures of the sum variable were observed. *Strength* of the 449 association categories were measured through calculating the frequencies (the absolute prevalence) and percentages (relative prevalence) of these categories in the whole data set. *Uniqueness* was observed on both respondent level (i.e. was the respondent able to provide at least one unique association out of the three provided responses) and response level (i.e. how many of the association categories were classified as unique, Nordic, or not unique).

In order to test the two hypotheses, the method of cross tabulations and the observations from its results were utilized. For H1, the variables regarding the respondents' travel experiences and ability to provide unique associations in Q7 were compared. For H2, the cross tabulation was made on the variables describing Finland's ranking in Q5 and the respondents' ability to provide unique associations in Q7. For the measuring of the statistical significance of the results and dependencies of the variables in these two

hypotheses, Pearson Chi-squared tests and the calculation of contingency coefficients were computed for the two cross tabulated data sets. All the statistical functions were done by using IBM SPSS Statistics software and Microsoft Excel.

## **5 Results**

Due to quota sampling, some of the quota variables, such as gender and city, were evenly distributed among the respondents. Out of the 1,004 respondents, 50.3 percent were male and 49.7 percent female, and the cities of residence of the respondents were evenly divided between the six cities – Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou and Wuhan having 167 participants, and Chongqing and Hong Kong having 168 participants. As the age of the participants ranged from 20-50 years, 27.3 percent were aged 20-29, 44.4 percent 30-39, and 28.3 percent were 40-50 years old. A vast majority, 75.6 percent of the participants, had completed a bachelor's degree, whereas 22.1 percent a master's degree and only 2.3 percent a doctorate degree or above. Almost 89 percent of the participants had previously travelled abroad, as 6.6 percent had travelled to Finland, 7.2 percent to another Nordic country, 39.8 percent to another European country, and 35.4 percent to another country abroad outside Europe.

### *Awareness*

In Q6, respondents were asked whether they recognized of having heard of Finland before taking the survey. Out of the 1,004 respondents, 981 (97.7 percent) said yes, 17 (1.7 percent) said no, and 6 (0.6 percent) stated that they were not sure. This implies that recognition of Finland was strong within the respondents of this survey. Recall was measured in this survey data through missingness of responses in Q7. Missingness refers to the responses that were missing or illegible, or if the same association was repeated more than once in the respondent's three responses, as well as if the respondent just simply indicated of not knowing or couldn't think of anything to answer. All the respondents were asked to provide three things that come to their mind when thinking of Finland, which would make a total of 3012 associations. However, there were only 2,872 qualified responses, making the missingness rate of Q7 4.6 percent. If looking at

the respondents in table 4, we can see that for 98.2 percent of the respondents the cue “Finland” was able to provide at least some recalling.

Table 4. Categorization of respondents based on their ability to respond in Q7.

	Frequency	Percent
Respondent managed to respond 3 attributes	923	91.9
Respondent managed to respond 2 attributes	40	4.0
Respondent managed to respond 1 attribute	23	2.3
Respondent failed to respond with any attributes	18	1.8
Total	1004	100.0

### *Strength*

The associations that respondents provided in Q7 were categorized into 449 individual association categories and three additional categories to indicate response missingness, which all are listed in appendix II. Associations that were mentioned more than once by an individual respondent were categorized so that the double or triple mentions were marked as missing. Therefore, the frequencies of each association category in appendix II also refer to how many respondents in the data mentioned the association. The 449 categories covered 2,872 responses.

The ten strongest associations that covered 1,009 responses (equaling to notably 35 percent of all the eligible responses), included ‘cold’ (mentioned by 172 respondents), ‘Santa Claus’ (164), ‘northern lights’ (156), ‘beautiful’ (132), ‘snow’ (93), ‘Nokia’ (83), ‘the land of a thousand lakes’ (65), ‘Northern Europe’ (57), ‘beautiful sceneries’ (51) and ‘Helsinki’ (36). Image 2 shows all the associations that were mentioned in the data by 15 respondents or more, equaling to 41 association categories and covering 1,743 responses.





Image 2. Association categories that appeared in the response data 15 times or more, equalling to 41 association categories and covering 1,743 responses. The word cloud was created in wordclouds.com web tool (Wordclouds.com 2017).

### *Favorability*

When looking at the frequencies of the responses in Q7b as well as the created sum variable of each respondents' responses, we can see that the perceptions of Finland are strongly and predominantly positive (image 3). Due to the huge range of the frequencies of each association category, it was difficult to systematically compare the rankings of each association category reliably. Apart from 'cold' – which divided opinions and was majorly rated as neutral – the ten strongest associations mentioned above were all rated favorably (as positive or slightly positive) in the Likert-scale question Q7b, where the scale was from 1 (negative) to 5 (positive). The mean averages of the top ten association categories were: 'cold' (mean average rating 3.04), 'Santa Claus' (4.78), 'northern lights' (4.77), 'beautiful' (4.79), 'snow' (4.26), 'Nokia' (4.46), 'the land of a thousand lakes' (4.83), 'Northern Europe' (4.39), 'beautiful sceneries' (4.92) and 'Helsinki' (4.39). Out of all the responses, the mode and median were both 5.0, and the mean average was 4.47. When looking at the sum variables of the respondents, who responded with three

associations, the mode was 15.0, median 14.0 and the mean average 13.5. These figures indicate that within the respondents of this survey, the favorability rate of images of Finland is high.

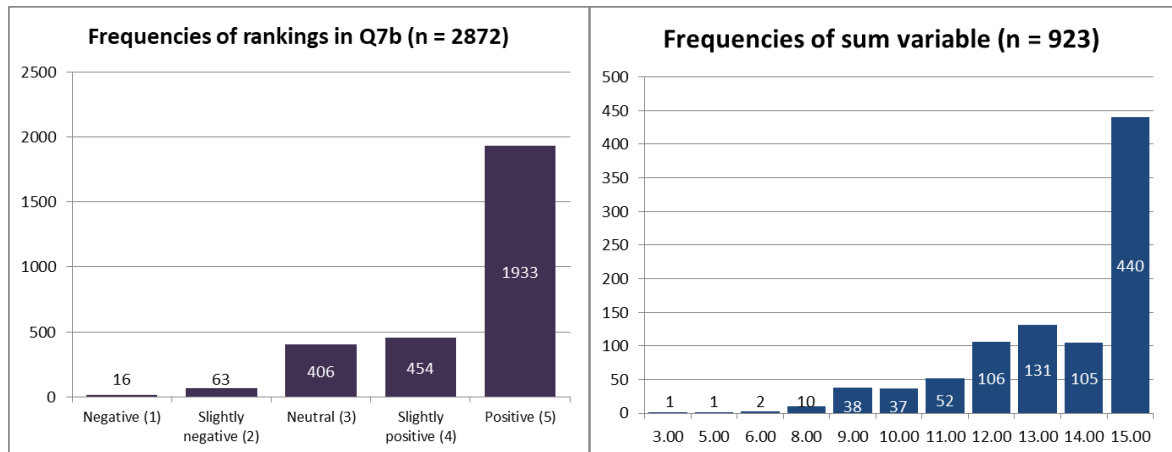


Image 3. Measuring favorability in the survey data. The diagram on the left shows the rankings of all eligible 2,872 responses in Q7b, whereas the diagram on the right shows the sum variable from those respondents, who managed to provide three eligible associations in Q7b (923 respondents). In both cases we can see that the maximum ranking (Positive (5) and sum of 15) are the most predominant in the data, making the favorability rate high.

### *Uniqueness*

For the categorization of whether the association categories that were responded in Q7 were unique, not unique, or Nordic, in addition to previous research and literature mentioned in chapter 3, the responses from Q5b were also utilized as a support to the categorization of unique and Nordic associations. It was seen as appropriate, as the phrasing of the question “Why would you be most interested in visiting...?” can also be interpreted as what the respondent holds unique in the chosen country, since there most likely was something different from the others that made the respondent choose it over the other countries. The amount of the responses for each Nordic country was distributed based on which country the respondent had chosen in Q5, therefore Sweden had the most responses (322), followed by Denmark (198), Finland (197), Iceland (169) and Norway (118). Some examples of popular responses for Q5b can be seen from image 4.

<b>Sweden (n=322)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Environment and nature</li> <li>• Well known in China</li> <li>• History and culture</li> <li>• "The land of a Thousand islands"</li> <li>• Safe, developed and modern</li> <li>• Nobel, Zlatan, IKEA...</li> <li>• Recommended by a friend</li> </ul>	<b>Finland (n=197)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Environment and nature</li> <li>• Northern lights</li> <li>• Santa Claus</li> <li>• Snow and Arctic Circle</li> <li>• Forests and lakes, pure nature</li> <li>• Education, hi-tech, Nokia..</li> <li>• Recommended by a friend</li> </ul>	<b>Denmark (n=198)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fairy tales by H.C. Andersen</li> <li>• The happiest country in the world</li> <li>• History</li> <li>• Pure nature</li> <li>• Modern and romantic</li> <li>• Food, Kjeldsens butter cookies</li> </ul>
<b>Iceland (n=169)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exotic and untouched nature</li> <li>• Northern lights and snow</li> <li>• Northern location ("almost like North Pole")</li> <li>• Volcanoes and hot springs</li> </ul>	<b>Norway (n=118)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nature and beautiful sceneries, fjords</li> <li>• Northern lights and snow</li> <li>• Fish and natural resources</li> <li>• Forests (Norwegian Wood by The Beatles)</li> </ul>	

Image 4. When respondents in Q5b were asked about why they would be most interested in traveling to their choice of the Nordic country in Q5, nature-related aspects were named as most common reasons to travel.

The results of the categorization show that out of all the 2,872 eligible responses, 37.6 percent were images to be associated with the Nordics, as 37.5 percent were not unique, and 20.3 percent uniquely Finnish (image 5). When these were converted into the corresponding association categories, the percentages were 30.1 for Nordic, 56.8 for non-unique association categories, and 13.1 for unique categories (image 5). After this the 1,004 respondents were categorized according to whether in Q7's three associations they were able to mention at least one unique attribute, or if not then at least one Nordic attribute. While 18 respondents failed to provide any associations for Q7, out of the rest 986 respondents, 410 respondents were able to provide at least one uniquely Finnish association in Q7. There were 382 respondents who did not provide any unique associations but managed to provide at least one Nordic attribute in their responses, and 194 respondents whose responses did not contain any unique or Nordic attributes. Even though looking at image 5, the unique associations seem to be at an overwhelming minority, when looking at this from respondents' point of view, unique attributes were fairly well known among the respondents.

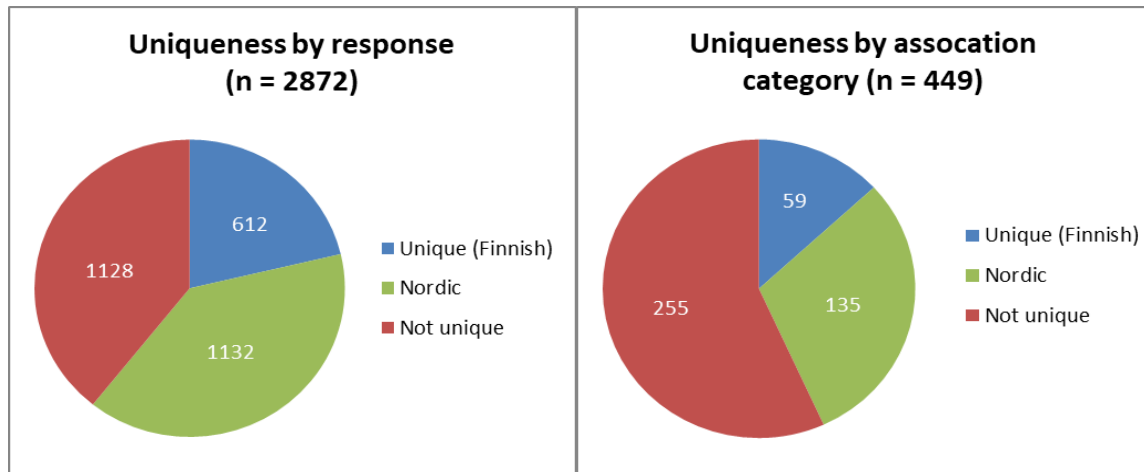


Image 5. Uniqueness of responses and association categories in Q7.

After measuring awareness, strength, favorability and uniqueness, the testing of the hypotheses stated in chapter 3 took place. For H1, the newly created variables for how close to Finland each respondent had travelled (Q1-Q3) and whether the respondent was able to provide any unique or Nordic responses in Q7 were cross tabulated, the results of which can be seen in table 5. For the testing of H2 – the results of which can be observed from table 6 – the variables for the respondents' ability to provide any unique or Nordic responses in Q7 (the same that was also used to test H1) and the willingness of traveling to Finland over other Nordic countries were cross tabulated.

As noted before when talking about the results for awareness and uniqueness, out of the 1,004 respondents, only 18 (equaling to 1.8 percent) were unable to provide any responses for Q7. For the rest of the respondents who were able to answer with one attribute or more, 410 respondents provided at least one unique attribute, 382 at least one Nordic attribute, and 194 answered with solely non-unique attributes. In table 5 we can see the frequencies of the newly formed variable, where respondents were divided according to travel experience, as in how close to Finland they have travelled before. Out of all the respondents, 66 respondents (6.6 percent) had previously travelled to Finland, while 72 (7.2 percent) had travelled to another Nordic country. Respondents that had previously travelled to another European country summed up to 400 respondents (39.8 percent), and 355 (35.4 percent) had travelled elsewhere abroad

before. There were 111 respondents (11.1 percent) that indicated of having never travelled abroad before.

Table 5. Testing H1, the cross tabulation of the respondents' travel experience and ability to provide unique associations in the responses.

The respondent has travelled to	Respondents' amount of unique associations				Total
	At least one unique attribute	No unique responses, but at least one Nordic attribute	No unique responses	Failed to respond all three items	
Finland	42	10	14	0	66
%	63.64%	15.15%	21.21%	0.00%	100.00%
Other Nordic country	46	18	8	0	72
%	63.89%	25.00%	11.11%	0.00%	100.00%
Other European country	155	173	69	3	400
%	38.75%	43.25%	17.25%	0.75%	100.00%
Other country abroad	130	139	79	7	355
%	36.62%	39.15%	22.25%	1.97%	100.00%
Never travelled abroad	37	42	24	8	111
%	33.33%	37.84%	21.62%	7.21%	100.00%
Total	410	382	194	18	1004
%	40.84%	38.05%	19.32%	1.79%	100.00%

$\chi^2=41.00$ ,  $df=8$ ,  $p<0.001$ ,  $C=0.200$  (n = 986)

The cross tabulation in table 5 shows us that out of the respondents who had travelled to either Finland or another Nordic country before, nobody failed to respond any attributes to Q7. Within these two respondent categories, also over 60 percent of the respondents were able to provide at least one unique attribute when describing Finland. Within other categories, the corresponding figures are below 40 percent. For the respondents who had not travelled to Finland or the Nordics before, the category of Nordic attributes had the

largest relative proportions of the respondents ranging between 37 and 43 percent. The non-unique attributes category was rather stable across all groups between 21 and 23 percent except for respondents that had travelled to Europe (17.2 percent) and respondents that had travelled to the Nordics (11.1 percent). As the number of respondents who failed to respond all three items in Q7 was very small compared to the other categories, it was perceived that the results from this category were not comparable with the other categories.

Table 6. Testing H2, cross-tabulation of respondents' ability to provide unique associations in the responses and ranking of Finland in Q5.

Respondents' amount of unique associations	Ranking of willingness to travel to Finland among all of the Nordic countries					Total
	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	
At least one unique attribute	92	85	65	84	84	410
%	22.44%	20.73%	15.85%	20.49%	20.49%	100.00%
No unique responses, but at least one Nordic attribute	63	55	84	97	83	382
%	16.49%	14.40%	21.99%	25.39%	21.73%	100.00%
No unique responses	40	48	41	39	26	194
%	20.62%	24.74%	21.13%	20.10%	13.40%	100.00%
Failed to respond all three items	2	6	2	6	2	18
%	11.11%	33.33%	11.11%	33.33%	11.11%	100.00%
Total	197	194	192	226	195	1004
%	19.62%	19.32%	19.12%	22.51%	19.42%	100.00%

$\chi^2=23.68$ ,  $df=8$ ,  $p<0.003$ ,  $C=0.153$  ( $n = 986$ )

Table 6, which tested H2, shows that Finland's ranking among the respondents in the choice of travel in Q5 was rather evenly distributed, ranging between 19 and 23 percent in each category from 1<sup>st</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup>. These rankings were cross tabulated with the ability to respond with unique attributes in Q7, and we can see from the table that for the respondents that were able to respond in Q7, the row percentages for each Q7 response category seems to be rather evenly distributed between 20 and 25 percent apart from a

few exceptions. These exceptions include the respondents who provided at least one unique attribute in Q7 and ranked Finland 3<sup>rd</sup> in Q5, respondents who provided at least one Nordic attribute and ranked Finland in Q5 as 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup>, as well as respondents whose all provided attributes were non-unique and ranked Finland as 5<sup>th</sup>. As the number of respondents who failed to respond all three items in Q7 was very small compared to the other categories, it was perceived that the results from this category weren't comparable with the other categories.

The analysis and interpretation of these cross-tabulation results will be discussed more in chapter 6.

## **6 Discussion**

In the previous chapter we discovered that Finland's country image within the Chinese respondents of the survey was widely based on nature-related associations, including depictions of Finland's cold weather, snowy winters, Northern lights, beautiful sceneries with forests and a thousand lakes. Well known components that were characteristically Finnish included Santa Claus, Nokia and sauna. The country and its people were described as developed, elegant, natural, warmhearted, fashionable, friendly and honest. Finland was also known as a part of the Nordic countries and its welfare.

There were some minor differences in the images between respondents from different cities, for example when Northern lights came to mind for 16 percent of all the respondents, in Hong Kong this was 29 percent, significantly above the average. Similarly, Finland was described as cold by over 1 out of 6 of all the respondents, but in Hong Kong this was almost 1 out of 3 respondents. Some of the respondents seemed to also confuse Finland (that is pronounced in Chinese as *fen lan* 芬兰) to the Netherlands (*he lan* 荷兰), because associations also included elements such as windmills and tulips. Out of the respondents who responded windmills, half were from Chongqing.

It was also observed in chapter 5 that the images of Finland were largely perceived as positive in the survey. Out of the 10 most common responses, beautiful sceneries, the land of a thousand lakes, beautiful and Santa Claus were rated as most positive attributes. Northern Europe was rated an average of slightly positive, as 47 percent of its respondents rated it as neutral and 40 percent as positive. The association cold was regarded mostly as neutral, slightly more positive rather than negative, and snow was rated by over half (56 percent) of its respondents as positive. Nokia was rated by 84 percent of its respondents as slightly positive or positive.

In order to answer research question 3 (RQ3), the results for the uniqueness of the image associations and the results for the testing of the two hypotheses of this research need to be looked into more in depth. As earlier noted, out of all the 2,872 eligible responses for image associations of Finland in Q7, non-unique and Nordic images covered both almost 40 percent of the responses, while unique attributes only a little over 20 percent. Out of the 449 association categories, 59 categories (accounting to about 13 percent) were unique, while 135 categories, one third of all the categories, were Nordic. What is to note about this, is that it is completely natural that when listing associations for Finland, Nordic-related images are bound to come up as well. This was already stated by Keller (1993: 6), who noted that in product branding “in almost all cases, some product category associations that are linked to the brand are shared with other brands in the category”, and that it is even necessary for the brand awareness. Thus, if we see the Nordic region as a parent category for Finland, this completely makes sense.

In order to get some perspective to these figures, we can compare these results to Stepchenkova and Shichkova’s (2016: 8) research results, which looked into the uniqueness of images associated with the United States. In their research, they had a similar survey question as this research’s Q7. The respondents were asked to provide the three first things that come to mind when thinking of the United States. Their total of 2,095 survey responses included 992 responses that were categorized as unique, accounting for about 48 percent. Correspondingly, these equaled to 66 unique categories out of 184 (36 percent).



With this comparison, we can immediately see that the uniqueness of the responses in this survey was not as extensive as in Stepchenkova and Shichkova's. This can be seen as rather natural, as the United States is a much larger country than Finland, and as a major player in world politics has over centuries gained more international visibility than Finland. The US also ranks higher than Finland in both the FutureBrand's Country Brand Index and Anholt-CfK's Nation Brand Index, even ranking as number 1 in the latter in 2016 (FutureBrand 2014b; GfK 2017b). Thus, if we think that unique associations need deeper and detailed knowledge about the country, visibility and knowledge are crucial, and thus it is rather natural the survey results in this research indicate that Finland's image uniqueness is not as strong as of US's. What is interesting though, is that if we look at unique and Nordic responses combined, the relative figures of those significantly exceed the figures of Stepchenkova and Shichkova's (2016) results on the US. What is arguable to this remark, however, is that the results are not comparable, as Stepchenkova and Shichkova used only two categories – unique or not unique – and nothing in between.

To understand uniqueness even deeper, and what influences a country image to be(come) unique, the two hypotheses were developed and tested. Taking first H1, one of the most notable observations from table 5 is that respondents, who had travelled previously to Finland or another Nordic country, seemed to be significantly more likely to be able to respond with at least one unique attribute in Q7. Also, respondents who had only travelled to another European country outside the Nordic, to another country abroad, or even never have travelled abroad, seemed to base their base their images of Finland relatively more on Nordic attributes than the corresponding respondents who had travelled to Finland or the Nordics. By looking at the relative proportions (row percentages) in table 5, apart from a few exceptions, there seems to be a slight connection between how close to Finland one has travelled and on how unique attributes the spontaneous country image associations are based on.

To support these above observations and remarks, statistical tools were decided to use to determine the statistical dependency of these two variables. What is to note, is that these dependency tests on the two hypotheses only test the correlation of the tested variables, but do not indicate whether there is causality between them. Because the cross tabulated data includes nominal variables, which means categorized data without particular order (e.g. from smallest to largest), the Pearson Chi-squared test and calculating the contingency coefficient can be used to measure the data's correlation (Paarlahti 2012). As it was mentioned in the previous chapter, the number of respondents who failed to respond all three items in Q7 was very small (18 respondents) compared to the other categories, and therefore it was perceived that the results from this category could not be used as comparable with the other categories. For this reason, this category was ignored in the hypothesis testing and omitted for the supporting statistical tests of Chi-squared test and the calculation of the contingency coefficient. In addition to the small sample size, omitting this category in the analysis phase was also reasonable as it made the tested data eligible for the statistical testing, because a criterion for the Chi-squared test is that none of the table cells are allowed to have the value 0 (Paarlahti 2012).

Based on responses of the 986 respondents who were able to provide any responses in Q7, a Pearson Chi-square test and contingency coefficient calculations were run on SPSS. On the last row of table 5 we can see the line " $\chi^2=41.00$ ,  $df=8$ ,  $p<0.001$ ", which refers to the results of the Chi-squared test. The Chi-squared test statistic ( $\chi^2$ ) was 41.00 with degrees of freedom equaling to 8. What is notable is that the p-value is  $<0.001$ , and as it is under 0.05, the data can be interpreted as statistically significant (Paarlahti 2012). This means that there is a dependency between the two cross tabulated variables shown in table 5. The Chi-squared test, however, does not show the strength of the dependency, and therefore the contingency coefficient (C) was also measured in SPSS. The value for contingency coefficient can range from the theoretical values 0 (no dependency) to 1 (strong dependency) (Paarlahti 2012). For the data in table 5 the value of the contingency coefficient was 0.200, which indicates that even though there is a dependency between the two variables, it is only a very slight one. Therefore, based on the observations and the statistical testing, we can only partly confirm H1.

The cross tabulation and testing of H2 can be seen from table 6, which shows us how interesting the respondents see Finland as a travel destination in the Nordics related to how well they could provide unique responses in Q7. As mentioned in chapter 5, the results of table 6 seem to be row percentage-wise rather evenly distributed apart from a few exceptions. Only observations that seem to support the hypothesis is that out of the respondents who described Finland with Nordic attributes in Q7, a relatively smaller proportion ranked Finland as 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> in Q5 than in other respondent groups.

Overall, there does not seem to be a straightforward visible trend in the relationship between willingness to travel to Finland and the ability to provide unique associations of Finland. However, to verify this observation the Chi-squared test and calculation of the contingency coefficient were performed for the data that excluded the 18 respondents who failed to respond in Q7. As a result, the Chi-squared test statistic was 23.68 with 8 degrees of freedom and the p-value as <0.003. We can see that even though the p-value for table 6 is not as small as it was for the hypothesis 1 in table 6, the results can still be interpreted as statistically significant. The value of the contingency coefficient was 0.153. As the coefficient in table 5 was 0.200, which as already a very low value, and ended up having to confirm the hypothesis only partially, it was interpreted that the value 0.153 for table 6 did not indicate a strong enough dependency for H2 to be accepted. This finding supports the results of Romaniuk and Gaillard's (2007: 277) research on product brands, where they found out that unique associations did not have a strong connection to the preference of the brand.

## **6.1 Implications of the results**

Based on these remarks, we can answer RQ3 on how Finland's country image relates to the images of other Nordic countries. Certainly, the image of Finland amongst the respondents is inseparable from the image of the Nordic region – in the survey responses attributes associated with the Nordics were far more numerous and diverse than those associated with Finland only. However, Finland's country branding strategy and messages consciously utilize Nordic images and reputation, and thus the fact that the

image of Finland has Nordic attributes can also be interpreted as an achieved goal in the country branding communications.

Anholt (2003: 127), says, that “[i]f people think anything about your country at all, you’re very lucky, because it means that you register on their radar screens, you exist”. Therefore, the responses from Q6, where 97.7 percent of the respondents identified of having heard of Finland before, is very valuable, even if the mental associations were based only on Nordic images. However, in order to take a step further from just *awareness*, and make a real impact, distinguishing oneself from the others is crucial. We noted before that one of the biggest challenges perceived for Finland is the differentiation from the other Nordic countries (Finland Promotion Board 2017c: 12), and this is the reason why this research has tried to seek out the answer to the third research question – can Finland’s country image distinguish itself from the other Nordic countries?

When focusing on the results of image uniqueness from the respondent point of view, it was discovered that out of the 1,004 survey respondents, over 40 percent (410 respondents) did associate Finland with unique attributes, while 38 percent (382 respondents) associated Finland with only Nordic attributes. This indicates that although Finland is strongly known as a part of the Nordics and for its Nordic characteristics among the respondents, it is indeed also rather widely known for attributes that are unique for Finland and distinguishes the country from the other Nordic countries. According to the survey results, it seems that the famousness of these unique attributes can possibly be strengthened through attracting visitors to travel to Finland or even other Nordic countries, as this can awaken the awareness the unique and differentiating characteristics of each of the individual Nordic countries. The closer you are, the more visible the details become.

## **6.2 Limitations and significance of the research**

What we have to note, when interpreting the results of this research, is that as the used sampling method was quota sampling. This means that the quota targets are set in

advance, and the online survey is kept open until enough respondents belonging to each of the defined quotas has answered the survey. For this reason, some respondents may be easier to reach while others (e.g. busier people) might be more easily left out. Therefore, quota sampling does not meet the criteria for random sampling, where the participants are chosen at random and acts as a representation of the whole population (Tilastokeskus 2018). This is why the results from this survey cannot be generalized to represent the entire population of Chinese working-aged middle class and can only provide indicative data on what kinds of imageries some Chinese people might have of Finland. However, as Roy et al. (2001: 204) note, it is extremely hard to achieve probability sampling in China. Therefore, it was seen that quota sampling is the most suitable way of sampling under the circumstances, and that even this kind of indicative data is extremely valuable, as it can show trends and provide even a slight picture of the researched phenomenon. For example, if we compare the research results from this survey to the Visit Finland Brand Tracking 2015 research (Ipsos Mori UK 2016), we can see some trends that have taken over the past few years. At the time of Visit Finland's research, the Chinese markets were more focused on traveling during the summer season, and winter traveling was only seen as a niche market (Ipsos Mori UK 2016: 89). Even though the results from this research are very similar to the results from 2015, we can see a clear change in the rise of winter attributes associated with Finland in the minds of Chinese consumers: winter related associations such as northern lights seem to be even more prevalent nowadays than a few years ago.

Another issue that needs to be taken into account when analyzing the results of this survey, are the respondents' cultural background and how that might affect the results. Stening and Zhang's (2007: 130) remark on possibly biased responses to answer the perceived "correct answer" was already mentioned earlier in chapter 4. This same remark has also been made by Adler et al. (1989 cit. Roy et al. 2001: 208) who pointed out that Chinese respondents might in some cases respond what they think that the researcher wants to hear instead of reflecting their own views. Roy et al. (2001: 208) also point out that sometimes survey responses can be biased if the Chinese respondent is trying to avoid "losing face" or enhance the researcher's face: the respondents may try

to give an impression of knowing more on the surveyed topic than they really do or try to answer what the researcher might want to hear. These are important remarks to understand in this research, where in questions like Q6 or Q7b it is easy to give an impression that the respondent has heard of Finland before even if he or she is not sure or give more positive ratings to image associations than they in reality feel. Therefore, the high ratings of the results in awareness and favorability need to be taken with certain caution.

The research was aimed to be designed and executed with securing the reliability and validity of the methods and results as carefully as it was possible under the circumstances. There were, however, perceived challenges and weaknesses that occurred as the research proceeded. For example, similarly as Stepchenkova and Shichkova (2016: 12-13) have noted, a significant weakness in this research was the method of categorizing unique and Nordic image associations, as they were made based on the judgements and perceptions of the author. To tackle this, Stepchenkova and Shichkova (2016: 12-13) suggest that the surveys could be constructed so that the categorization would be made by the respondents themselves.

Another way to make the categorization process more reliable would have been if the image associations of all the Nordic countries would have been surveyed, and after that compared with each other to find out the common and distinguishing attributes. In this research the Nordic images were attempted to be gathered from the branding strategies and target images from the different Nordic countries and the region as a whole. But of course, to be realistic, to systematically be able to gather all the possible information from all the individual branding organizations of each countries would need a lot more resources that this research paper could utilize.

Another perceived weakness in the research was that the responses from Hong Kong were analyzed along with the responses from Mainland China. There are several reasons why the results of Hong Kong would have been good and most of all interesting to handle as their own “comparison group” for the responses from Mainland China. Indeed,

even though the differences in the responses between the cities were not that big, there were visible differences in the responses from Hong Kong. However, Hong Kong was initially selected as one of the surveyed cities, because from the perspective of Finland's country branding strategy in China, Hong Kong is a significant location due to being one of the cities where one of Finland's foreign missions (the Consulate General) and a Finnish Chamber of Commerce are located. After the survey results were gathered, it was seen that the sample size from Hong Kong was not sufficient to act as a comparable group to all the responses from Mainland China, and for this research the choice was made to include the responses from the Special Administrative Region with all the other responses and examine the results of the survey from a wider perspective than just the Mainland China.

One inevitable fact must also be taken into account with the results of this research. If the survey were to be repeated today, the results would most likely be very different. The data was gathered in January 2017, and since then several events have occurred that most likely have reshaped Finland's country image in China. One of these major events was the earlier mentioned Chinese President Xi Jinping's state visit to Finland in 4-6 April 2017. The news, interviews, reports and commentaries related to the state visit were estimated to be read by tens or even hundreds of millions of readers across China within one week's time (Ulkoministeriö 2018: 43), and this cannot be overlooked when estimating the Chinese population's knowledge on Finland. The year 2017 was also Finland's 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of independence, and the Suomi100 campaign along with its numerous events around the world brought Finland a lot of positive visibility in the world media (Ulkoministeriö 2018: 5).

However, despite its challenges and weaknesses, this research does have a clear significance in its field of research. This research paper explored on how Finland is perceived in China, on what kinds of images the perception is based on, and how favorably it is perceived. This research has provided new information on Finland's country image's relations with the Nordic image in China, a topic where no previous research to the author's best knowledge has been conducted before. The research has partially confirmed one hypothesis and dismissed another, the knowledge of which can be utilized in future research. The results of

this paper are of value to Finnish country branding players and Finnish enterprises, who are working on how as well as what tools and marketing messages to use when promoting Finland or Finnish products and services in the Chinese markets, how to take advantage of Finland's Nordicity in China but also distinguish Finland's uniqueness from the other Nordic countries.

Suitable continuations for this research would for example be to conduct a research with interviews and other multi-method tools to verify the results of this research's survey as well as to get a deeper understanding on perceptions of Finland in China. Deeper knowledge in the formulation of perceptions of Finland in the minds of Chinese would also be an interesting topic of research – from where are the perceptions adapted from and do these initial perceptions change much over time as new information occurs? Other points to consider in the future could be to compare further the perceptions of Finland in different regions of China – different provinces and Special Administrative Regions all counted in. Do direct flight connections or the presence of a Finnish company influence the perceptions significantly? Also, it is generally perceived that the Nordics are well known in China, but a deeper understanding of the Nordic image in China would be a useful topic of exploration.

## **7 Conclusion**

This work has looked into Finland's country branding work and country image in China. Country branding is defined as the deliberate and conscious work that a country conducts in order to influence perceptions of it in a foreign audience, and country image is the perception that formulates in the minds of the targeted populations. China has been selected as one of Finland's focus countries in Finland's country branding work abroad, and the aim of this research was to seek the results of Finland's efforts so far and find indications on what aspects can be utilized in the country branding communications in the future.



A large survey for 1,004 respondents in China was conducted in collaboration with the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland and Survey Sampling International in January 2017. Respondents were selected from six different cities – Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou, Chongqing, Wuhan and Hong Kong – and belonged to the highly educated working-aged middle class. The survey data was analyzed through both qualitative and quantitative methods, spanning from content analysis to statistical tests.

For the analysis of the results, the concept of country image was deconstructed based on the concepts that Kevin Lane Keller (1993) has created for product brands. Based on this, the survey data was utilized to measure the awareness, strength, favorability and uniqueness of Finland's country image among the Chinese respondents. The results indicated that the respondents were very aware of Finland and perceived Finland as primarily very favorably. Finland was generally very well known for its cold and snowy climate, northern lights, beautiful nature, Santa Claus, Nokia and being a part of the Nordics. Even though it is inevitable that attributes for Finland are associated strongly with the Nordics, Finland was among the respondents also rather well known for uniquely Finnish attributes as well. There was a slight connection between the closer the respondent had travelled to Finland and the ability to name uniquely Finnish attributes when describing Finland. However, there was no found connection between the ability to provide uniquely Finnish attributes and the preference of travelling to Finland over other Nordic countries.

The results bring new information on the Chinese perceptions of Finland, and how these perceptions relate to the images of the other Nordic countries. The research is of significance to Finnish country branding organizations and enterprises, which conduct public diplomacy, trade promotion or other communications work in China. The results provide a better understanding on what kind of strong points can be used effectively in the promotion of Finland in China.

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## Appendix I

The conceptualization and operationalization of the hypotheses

### *Hypothesis H1*

The closer to Finland the one has travelled, the more likely the country image is based on uniquely Finnish attributes.

	Concept	Variable	Operation Definition
x	Travelled (close) to Finland	Travel experience	The respondents are categorized according to whether they have travelled to 1) Finland, 2) Other Nordic Country, 3) Other European Country, 4) Other country abroad, 5) Never travelled abroad (Q1-Q3)
y	Uniquely Finnish image associations	<p>Unique</p> <p>Nordic target image</p>	<p>The association can be interpreted as uniquely Finnish, if it refers “to a particular place in [Finland] (state, city, location, attraction), a global company that originated in [Finland] - - , icons of [Finnish] culture, or historical and political figure”. (Stepchenkova and Shichkova 2016: 6) The association is also interpreted as unique if it is related to a Finnish stereotype or used as a marketing message in Finland’s country branding strategy and communications and cannot be associated to any other Nordic country.</p> <p>The <i>Strategy for International Branding of the Nordic Region 2015-2018</i> (Nordic Council of Ministers 2015) will be referred to and attributes referring to any of the “five strengths of the Nordic</p>

	Nordic perceptions	<p>Perspective” will be interpreted as Nordic and thus not seen as uniquely Finnish.</p> <p>The associations used to describe Finland that are also frequently associated with other Nordic countries in the data (Q5b) or used as marketing messages in the country branding strategies of any other Nordic country, will be interpreted as Nordic attributes and thus not seen as uniquely Finnish.</p>
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### *Hypothesis H2*

The more one bases Finland’s country image on uniquely Finnish attributes, the more likely he or she is prefers traveling to Finland over other Nordic countries.

	Concept	Variable	Operation Definition
x	Uniquely Finnish image associations	(same as H1)	
y	Preference	Travel preference	Out of the Nordic countries Finland is ranked first as the country where the respondent would be most interested to visit, if money was not a concern (Q5).

## Appendix II

List of the categorized associations in alphabetical order and the corresponding Chinese responses of Q7.

English translations	(Chinese) responses in data	count
abundant with natural resources	资源广阔	1
advanced	advanced	1
	先进	5
	先进的	1
	高级	2
	技术先进	1
aesthetics	唯美	1
affordable	实惠	1
air	空气	2
alcohol	酒	2
amazing	amazing	1
ancient	古老	3
Angry Birds	Angry Bird	1
	Angrybird	1
annoying visitors	麻烦客人	1
anti-corrupt	反腐	1
	廉政	1
	全球清廉指数	1
area	地区	1
arts	艺术	2
	艺术家	1
	文艺	1
atmosphere	气氛	1
authentic	真实	2
avant-garde	前卫的	1
ball team	球队	1
bathing	bath	2
	洗澡	2
	沐浴	1
	森林浴	1
beautiful	beautiful	2
	beautifual	1
	beautiful place	1
	美	9
	美丽	102

	美丽富饶	2
	芬兰美	1
	好美	2
	美好	7
	靚	1
	靚丽	1
	秀丽	1
	明媚	1
	华丽	1
beautiful nature	大自然美	1
	无限优美的自然风光	1
beautiful sceneries	壮观	3
	景美	2
	景色优美	2
	景色好	3
	景色宜人	2
	景色美	1
	景色美丽	1
	风景好	1
	风景美	2
	风景美丽	3
	风景迷人	1
	风景宜人	1
	风景优美	10
	风景优美的	1
	风景漂亮	1
	风光优美	1
	山清水秀	1
	美丽的风景	1
	美丽风光	1
	美景	13
beautiful women	美女	7
	美女多	1
	漂亮的女人	1
beer	啤酒	3
Beethoven	贝多芬	1

big	大	2
	高大的	1
big population	大众	1
blue	蓝色	1
blue cross	蓝十字	1
	“蓝色十字”旗	1
blue hour	蓝色时刻	3
brandy	白兰地	1
bread	面包	1
buildings	good building	1
	建筑	1
	建筑艺术	1
	建筑宏伟	1
	温馨的建筑	1
	古建筑	1
	令人陶醉充满艺术 的建筑	1
cabins	别墅	1
	小屋	1
calm	calm	1
capitalism	资本主义	2
	资本主义国家	1
car racing	赛车	2
	F1 赛车	1
Carnegie Mellon university	卡内基梅伦大学	1
cars	汽车	1
cartoons	卡通	1
castles	城堡	1
	古堡	1
characteristic	特色	1
	个性	2
	有气质	1
	有素质	1
charming	魅力	13
	迷人	3
	韵味	1
cheap	cheap fee	1
chocolate	巧克力	1
Christianity	Christian	1
	基督教	2
Christmas	Christmas	4
	Xmas	3

	圣诞	4
	圣诞节	4
Christmas tree	圣诞树	1
churches	教堂	5
civilized	文明	4
classical	古典	7
	经典	2
	精典	1
classy	有档次	1
clean	clean	1
	干净	13
	干净的	1
	整洁清新	2
	洁净	1
	清洁	2
	整洁	1
clean environment	环境干净	1
climate	气候	2
close to North Pole	靠近北极	1
close to Russia	与俄罗斯接壤	1
	靠近俄罗斯	1
close to South Pole	离南极近	1
coastline	海岸	1
	海洋线曲折	1
cod fish	鳕鱼	1
cold	cold	32
	very cold	1
	严寒	4
	冰冷	4
	冷	52
	寒冷	75
	清冷	2
	很冷	1
	寒冰	1
cold weather	天气冷	2
colorful	丰富多彩	1
comfortable	comfort	1
	舒服	3
	舒适	13
	舒适的	1
	自在	1

	身心舒适	1
	安逸	4
communication	通讯	1
concise	简约	1
congested	堵	1
conservative	保守	3
convenient	便利	1
	便宜	1
cool	cool	6
	酷	1
	酷酷	1
costumes	Finland costume	1
country	land	1
	国家	2
countryside	乡村	2
creativity and innovations	creative	1
	创新	2
	创意	1
	创造	1
cross	十字架	1
culture	culture	1
	人文	4
	文化	6
	文化深厚	1
	文化悠久	1
	文化特色	1
	文化体验好	1
	多文化	1
	地域文化	1
curiosity	好奇	1
cute	可爱	1
dancing	dancing	1
death metal	死亡金属	1
December	december	1
deers	deer	2
	鹿	2
delicate	小巧	1
democracy	民主	3
design	design	1
developed	发达	27

	发达国家	3
	高度发达	4
	世界高度发达国家	1
developed economy	经济发达	3
dignified	端庄	1
diverse	缤纷	1
diverse products	物产丰富	1
drawing	画	1
dream	梦幻	2
Eastern	东方之地	1
eating	吃	2
eco-friendly	环保	3
	环保的	1
education	education	1
	good education	1
	good education system	1
	教育	1
	教育发达	1
	教育方式成功	1
electronics	电子	1
elegant	elegant	1
	优美	20
	优雅	6
	典雅	2
elevation	海拔	1
elves	精灵	1
emptiness	空虚	1
engineers	engineer	1
England	england	1
English skills	英语可以	1
entertainment	娱乐	2
environment	环境	5
equality	平等	3
eskimos	爱斯基摩人	1
ethnic groups	民族	1
ethnic pride	民族自豪感	1
Euro	Euro	1
Europe	Europe	3
	欧洲	18

	欧洲国家	1
	欧洲第七大国	1
	属于欧洲	1
European style	欧式	1
	欧洲风格	1
European Union	欧盟	4
	欧盟成员国	1
expensive	expensive	1
	贵	2
ex-USSR	前苏联	1
fair and just	公平	1
fairy tales	storyland	1
	童话	8
	故事	1
faith	信仰	1
familiar	熟悉	1
famous	有名	2
	知名	2
	著名	1
	文明	1
Fanta	芬达	2
faraway	遥远	4
	远	2
	很远	1
	太原	1
farms	农场	1
fashionable	时尚	30
	流行	2
	潮流的	2
fast	fast	1
fat	fat	1
fields	田野	1
	田园	1
FINDS ( Nordic restaurant in HK)	FINDS	1
fine	fine	1
Finland	finland	1
	芬兰	4
Finnair	Finnair	1
	FinAir	1
	芬兰航空	7
	航空	1

Finnish flag	国旗	1
Finnish language	芬兰语	2
fish	鱼	1
	鱼多	1
fishing industry	渔业	3
	渔牧业发达	1
fjords	峡湾	1
flourishing	繁荣	2
	繁华	1
Flying Finn	芬兰飞人	1
food delicacies	cuisine	1
	food	2
	美味	4
	美食	20
	美食天堂	2
	美食诱惑	1
	美食种类多	1
	食物多样	1
	甜点	1
football	football	1
	足球	5
	足球还好	1
foreign	not a common place	1
	外国	2
	异域	1
	异国情调	1
	异国风情	1
forests	forest	1
	森林	27
	森林之国	1
	森林多	1
	森林覆盖	1
	树林	1
	林海	1
freedom	freedom	1
	自由	10
fresh	新鲜	2
	清新	4
friendly	friendly	1
	frendly	1
	友好	20

	友好的	3
	友善	5
	友善的	1
	友爱	1
	人民友好	1
	和蔼可亲	1
fun	fun	1
	好玩	10
	好玩的	1
fur farming	芬兰狐	1
furniture	家具	1
gardens and flowers	garden	1
	flower	1
	花园	3
	花	2
	花朵	1
	花卉	1
	奇葩	1
generous	大方	1
gentle	平和	1
	温和	2
giant	giant	1
glass houses	glasshouse	1
golden yellow	金黄	1
good	good	5
	好	6
	好好	1
	很好	2
	非常好	1
	好的	1
	好地方	1
	棒	1
good and beautiful environment	环境优美	7
	环境优雅	1
	环境好	11
	环境好的	1
	环境美	2
	环境宜人	1
	优美环境	1
good and fresh air	空气好	12

	空气新鲜	1
	空气清新	1
	清新的空气	1
good circumstances	风情好	1
good destination	好去处	1
good economy	经济好	1
good location	位置优越	1
good relations	good relationship	1
good reputation	口碑不错	1
good-looking	好看	6
grand	宏伟	1
grasslands	草原	2
great	great	1
green	green	1
	绿色	2
	绿	1
green spaces (e.g. In cities)	绿地	1
grim	冷酷	1
Gulf of Finland	芬兰湾	1
handsome men	帅哥	2
happiness	happy	1
	幸福	8
	幸福感	1
harbours	海港	1
harmonious	和谐	7
	和谐的	2
healthy	健康	1
Helsinki	Helsinki	1
	赫尔辛基	35
Helsinki Cathedral	赫尔辛基大教堂	2
high incomes	收入高	2
	待遇高	1
high latitude location	纬度高	1
	高纬度	1
high quality	高品质	1
	高档	1
high quality of life	生活品质高	1
	高标准的生活品质	1
high-end	high class	1
	高端	4



highlands	高原	1
high-profile	高调	1
historical sites	名胜古迹	1
history	历史	2
	历史悠久	6
	历史感	1
	悠久的历史	1
honest	清廉	12
	清廉高效	1
	淳朴	2
	淳朴善良的芬兰人	1
	人民淳朴	1
	廉洁	1
	纯正	1
	厚道	1
hospitable	好客	6
	好客的	1
hot springs	温泉	3
hunting	打猎	1
ice	ice	3
	冰	2
	冰原	1
ice sculpturing	冰雕	1
ice skating	冰刀	1
icebergs	冰山	1
icebreakers	破冰船	2
Iceland	冰岛	1
iglos	冰屋	2
IKEA	IKEA	2
impressive	大气	7
inclusive	包容	1
independent	独立	1
industrialized	工业化	3
	高度工业化	1
	高度工业化、自由化	1
interesting	interesting	1
	有意思	2
	有趣	9
	有趣的	1
international	国际	1
	国际化	1

intimate	亲切	4
introverted	内敛	3
Ireland	爱尔兰	1
island country	岛国	3
islands	岛屿	3
	岛屿众多	2
	岛屿多	2
	海岛	1
isolated	与世无争	1
Jari Litmanen	利特马宁	1
	列马伦	1
Jean Sibelius	西贝柳斯	1
joy	快乐	7
	愉快	1
	心情愉快	1
	欢乐	1
	愉悦	1
Kerimäki Church	凯里迈基教堂	1
Kimi Räikkönen	Kimi	1
	Kimi Raikknon	1
	冰人莱科宁	1
	莱科宁	1
	拉高伦	1
kind	善良	3
	和蔼	1
kingdom	古王国	1
	城堡王国	1
Korvatunturi mountain	耳朵山	1
kuksa cup	手雕白桦木杯	1
lakes	多湖的	1
	湖	2
	湖多	2
	湖水	1
	湖泊	20
	湖泊多	1
	湖泊众多	1
	湖泊很多	1
	湖沼之国	1
	共有 187888 个湖泊和 98050 个岛屿	1

land of ice	冰国	1
land of ingenious people	人杰地灵	1
land of snow	冰雪王国	1
	雪国	1
	冰天雪地	5
	冰雪世界	3
language magazines	语言杂志	1
Lanzhou	兰州	1
Lapland	拉普兰	1
legends	神话	2
leisurely	悠闲	4
	悠闲生活	1
	优闲	1
liberalization	自由化	1
light	light	1
lilies	百合	1
lilies of the valley	铃兰	17
Linux	linux	1
lions	狮子	1
livable	宜居	2
	适宜居住	1
lively	热闹	1
	活泼	2
livestock	牛羊	1
local	乡土	1
lonesome	寂寞	1
long and narrow land area	地域狭长	1
long coastline	海岸线长	1
	长海岸线	1
long winters	冬季漫长	1
long-standing	悠久	1
	悠久的	1
love	love	1
low-profile	低调	3
luxurious	奢华	1
marihuana	大麻	1
maritime industries	海产	1
	海洋业发达	1
massage	按摩	1
master	大师	1

medieval churches	中世纪教堂	1
metropolies	都市	1
	大都市	1
midsummer	仲夏节	1
migration	移民	1
milk	牛奶	1
milk powder	奶粉	1
milu deers	麋鹿	3
mobile phones	mobile phone	1
	手机	4
modern	现代	15
	现代的	1
modernization	现代化	2
Moomins	姆明	3
	姆名	1
mountains	mountain	1
	山峰	1
	山多	1
	雪山	2
	山谷	1
music	music	1
	音乐	4
mystical	神奇	2
	神秘	12
National Museum of Finland	芬兰国家博物馆	1
natural	自然	26
	天然	3
	天然的	1
nature	nature	1
	大自然	4
	自然风光	2
nice	nice	4
	nice place	1
	nice people	1
nice weather	nice weather	1
nighttime	黑夜	1
Nightwish	夜愿	1
no feelings	无感	1
	没感觉	1
	没有感觉	1
no pollution	无污染	1

noble	高贵	4
	高尚的	2
Nokia	Nokia	9
	诺基亚	71
	手机诺基亚	1
	诺基亚	1
	诺基亚	1
North Pole	北极	12
northern	北方	1
	北面	1
Northern Europe	Northern Europe	2
	北欧	48
	北欧五国	1
	北欧国家	2
	欧洲北部	2
	北欧风情	2
Northern lights	arctic light	1
	aurora	5
	north pole light	1
	northern light	2
	polar light	3
	北极之光	1
	北极光	63
	极光	76
	极光之美	2
	有北极光	1
	北级光	1
not bad	不错	1
	还不错	1
novel	新颖	1
ok	ok	1
open-minded	开放	3
	开放的自由的	1
	开阔	1
optimistic	乐观	2
	豁达	1
orchids	兰花	1
ordinary	一般	2
original	原始	1
	原汁原味	1
Otis	Otis	1

pandas	熊猫	1
paper	纸	1
papermaking	造纸	2
	造纸业	1
peaceful	和平	6
	宁静	4
	安宁	1
	爱好和平	1
penguins	企鹅	1
people	人	5
	人口	1
	芬兰人	1
pine wood	松木	1
pirates	海盗	1
playful	playful	1
pleasant climate	气候宜人	6
	气候较好	2
	气候舒适	2
pleasantly surprising	惊喜	1
pleasing	惬意	1
polar bears	北极熊	1
polar climate	极地气候	1
polar night	极夜	2
	极昼极夜	1
polar region	极地	2
	北极之地	1
populous	富庶	1
Porvoo	波尔沃	1
powerful	强大	1
	富强	1
pretty	pretty	1
	漂亮	16
	漂亮的	1
	漂亮的国家	1
professional	专业	1
prosperous	富裕	6
	充裕	1
	富足	1
purchasing	采购	1
	采购部	1
pure	纯净	3

	纯洁	1
Puukko knives	芬兰刀	1
quiet	安静	6
	恬静	1
	幽静	1
	静	2
	寂	1
	平静	1
red wine	红酒	1
reindeers	raindeer	1
	驯鹿	3
relaxed	relax	3
	relaxed	1
	休闲	4
	休闲的	1
	轻松	1
	放松	2
reliable	可靠	4
republic	共和国	1
romantic	浪漫	23
	浪漫的	1
	浪漫的街道	3
Russia	俄罗斯	1
sacred	神圣	2
safe	安全	12
	安全的	1
	很安全	1
	治安好	1
salmon	三文鱼	2
	海鲜三文鱼	1
Sami people	萨米人	10
	萨米文化	5
	萨米族娃娃	1
Santa Claus	Santa	8
	Santa Chros	1
	Santa Claus	11
	Santa Clause	2
	圣诞老人	139
	声带老人	1
	可爱的圣诞老人	1
	圣诞老人数量	1

Santa Claus Village	Sanat Clause Estate	1
	圣诞老人家乡	1
	圣诞老人的故乡	5
	圣诞老人村	19
	圣诞老人之家	2
sauna	sauna	2
	桑拿	11
	桑拿浴	3
	芬兰浴	18
scarce	稀少	1
scenery	scenery	2
	scenic	1
	view	2
	景	1
	景点	1
	景色	3
	风景	7
	自然风景	1
	自然景观	1
science and technology	technology	1
	科技	5
	高科技	5
	科技发达	1
sea	海	1
	海洋	2
	大海	1
	靠近海洋	1
	海边	1
	海景	1
seafood	seafood	1
sentiment	情调	1
severe climate	气候严峻	1
shoes	鞋	1
shopping	购物	1
	逛街	1
simple	simple	1
	简单	2
	朴实	2
	古朴	1
	朴素	1
sincere	真诚	1

	诚信的	1
sisu	SISU 精神	1
skiing	滑雪	17
skirts	裙	1
sled dogs	雪橇犬	1
sleighs	雪橇	1
slow	慢	1
slow life	慢生活	2
small	小	1
	很小	1
	袖珍	1
small area	面积小	1
small country	小国	2
small population	人少	4
	人民小	1
	人口小	1
	小众	1
small towns	小镇	1
	小镇	1
snow	snow	13
	大雪	2
	雪	31
	雪地	4
	白雪	6
	冰雪	36
	绝美的冰雪	1
snowfall	下雪	2
snowmen	雪人	1
snowy landscape	雪景	13
	冰雪风光	1
spa	spa	1
	finland spa	1
spacious	空旷	1
special	特别	3
stable	稳定	4
	安定	2
Stockholm	斯德哥尔摩	1
	斯哥德尔蒙	1
strong	strong	1
	强壮	1
study abroad	留学	2

suburbs	郊区	1
sunlight	阳光	2
Suomenlinna	芬兰堡	8
	赫尔辛基芬兰堡	1
Supercell	Supercell	2
supportive	supportive	1
surrounded by water	四面环水	1
swans	天鹅	1
	大天鹅	13
swimming team	游泳队	1
talc	滑石	1
talent	人才	1
Tampere	坦佩雷	1
Temppeliaukio Church	岩石教堂	3
texture	质感	1
the Arctic Circle	北极圈	11
the Arctic Ocean	北冰洋	1
The Baltic Sea	波罗的海	4
The land of a thousand islands	千岛之国	13
	“千岛之国”与“千湖之国”，浪漫的街道、温馨的建筑、	1
The land of a thousand lakes	千湖之国	63
	千湖	2
the Little Mermaid	小美人鱼	1
the Nobel Prize	诺贝尔纪念馆	1
the Winter War	苏芬战争	2
theatre	剧院	7
time-consuming	需时间	1
to assume	担当	1
to enjoy	enjoy	1
	享受	3
to follow	follow	1
to have fun	游玩	1
to keep away from	劈开	1
to leave home	离开家	1
to like	喜欢	4
to look forward to	期待	1
to sleep	睡	1
to take risks	冒险	1

to yearn for	向往	9
	向往的	1
	憧憬	2
touching	动人	1
tourist sights	旅游胜地	6
	旅游地	1
	旅行景点	1
	旅游热点	1
traditional	传统	5
traditions	习俗	1
	风俗	2
trains	火车	1
transparent	透明国际	1
transportation	交通	1
	交通便利	1
traveling	sightseeing	1
	旅游	6
	芬兰旅游	1
	适合旅游	1
tribes	部族	1
tulips	郁金香	6
	郁金香	1
Turku	图尔库	3
Turku Cathedral	图库尔大教堂	1
uncharacteristic	没有特色	1
unfamiliar	陌生	1
	不熟悉	2
unique	独特	9
	独特的	2
	气候独特	1
	奇特	1
universities	大学	2
unlively	不热情	1
untouched ecology	原生态	1
vast	辽阔	1
vast but thinly populated land	地广人稀	2
visa exemption	免签	1
vitality	活力	1
vodka	伏特加	2
	伏加特	1
warm	warm	1

	温暖	1
warmhearted	热情	22
	热情的	2
	热心	1
	温情	1
	温馨	3
	人民热情	1
	人们热情	1
	人们很热情	1
waste	浪费	1
watches	表	1
wealthy	有钱	2
	富有	4
	富饶	4
weather	weather	1
	天气	1
welfare	good welfare	1
	福利	2
	福利国家	2
	福利好	5
	高福利	7
well-educated	well-educated	1
western	西方	1
	欧美	1
wheat fields	麦田	1
white	white	1
	白	1
	白色	4
white people	白种人	1
wild	狂野	1
windmill	风车	2
	大风车	22
winter	winter	1
	冬天	4
	冬季	2
winter sports	冰雪运动	2
winter swimming	冷水浴	1
wisdom	智慧	1
wish to understand as soon as possible	尽快了解	1
wish to visit	想去	1

wonderful	wonderful	1
	奇妙	1
	奇妙的	1
wonderland	仙境	1
	童话世界	1
wood	木材	1
	木头	1
wood carving	木雕	1
wooden products	木制品	1
world heritage	世界遗产	1
worth sharing	值分享	1
worthy	值得	1
	值得去	1
don't know	don't know	1
	no idea	1
	不	1
	知	1
	道	1
	不知	1
	不知道	10
	不好说	1
	不清楚	1
	不记得	1
	不记得了	1
	想不起	2
	想不到	1
	不了解	1
	不清楚 2	1
	不清楚 3	1
the same respondent repeats the same response	真的不知道	1
	ok	1
	good	1
	great	1
	很好	1
	棒	1
	神秘	1
	亮丽	1
	芬兰美丽	1
	芬兰美丽嘛	1
	还是冷	1

	非常冷	1
	不错	1
missing / illegible	acrade	1
	bijok	1
	hello	1
	how are you	1
	NA	1
	n/a	3
	ji guan	1
	nil	5
	no	4
	nil2	1
	none	1
	nothing	1
	NZO	1
	sona	1
	sonna	1
	Thanks	1
	Voka	1
	yes	2
	， ，	2
	、 、	1
	1	1
	2	1
	一	1
	二	1
	三	1
	没有	5
	没	1
	没什么	1
	没有体验	1
	无	10
	不	1
	不啊	1
	不啊红色	1
	东方红法国	1
	你好	1
	供货方很尴尬	1
	冬站	1
	冯	1
	哈奥玩	1

	女不女	1
	姐姐	1
	弔	1
	打开	1
	欧啦	1
	红	1
	苏里河	1
	大法官法	2
	人多嘴杂	1
	什么	1
	冰兰	1
	对方提供	1
	恢复了	1
	才	1
	明主	1
	月	1
	有	1
	脏	1
	苏兰湾	1
	謝謝	1
	飞打发打发好	1
	量	1
	人傻钱多	1
	值	2
	兰	1
	其他	1
	发源	1
	喜文化	1
	懂	1
	扣扣	1
	撒	1
	玩	1
	磨	1
	纳维斯	1
	芬兰物	1
	讽德诵功当然会	1



## Appendix III

Questionnaire form (English + Chinese simplified and traditional translations)

ENGLISH

### Screener

QS1. Are you...

1. Male
2. Female

QS2. In what year were you born? **[DROP DOWN LIST 1915-2016, PUT INTO AGE QUOTA GROUPS, TERMINATE <20 YEARS OLD and >50 YEARS OLD]**

QS3. Which city do you live in? **[ALPHA-ORDER PUNCHES 1-14. CHECK QUOTAS.]**

1. Beijing
2. Shanghai
3. Guangzhou
4. Chongqing
5. Wuhan
6. Hong Kong
7. Macau **[TERMINATE]**
8. Taipei **[TERMINATE]**
9. Shenyang **[TERMINATE]**
10. Tianjin **[TERMINATE]**
11. Xi'an **[TERMINATE]**
12. Chengdu **[TERMINATE]**
13. Shijiazhuang **[TERMINATE]**
14. Shenzhen **[TERMINATE]**
15. Other **[TERMINATE]**

QS4. What is the highest level of education you have completed?

1. Middle school **[TERMINATE]**
2. High school **[TERMINATE]**
3. Vocational school **[TERMINATE]**
4. Bachelor's degree
5. Master's degree
6. Doctorate or above

...

*Q55-Q57 surveys the respondents' education level, income level, employment status and type of employer.*

...

INTRO1. Congratulations! You have qualified for this survey. This survey should take about 10 minutes of your time. There are no right or wrong answers, we are simply interested in your experiences and opinions. Rest assured your answers will be kept confidential.

Prior Travel **[SHOW ALL]**

Q1. Which of the following have you ever done? Please select all that apply. **[MULTI-SELECT.**

**RANDOMIZE PUNCHES 1-5.]**

1. Travelled internationally
2. Purchased an automobile
3. Attended a concert
4. Purchased a washing machine
5. Visited an amusement park
6. None of the above **[EXCLUSIVE PUNCH]**

**[SHOW Q2 IF Q1=1]** Q2. You mentioned you have previously travelled abroad. Where have you travelled abroad? Please select all that apply. **[MULTI-SELECT. RANDOMIZE PUNCHES 1-9.]**

1. United States
2. South America
3. Canada
4. Europe
5. Russia
6. Africa
7. Other Asian country
8. Australia/New Zealand
9. Middle East
10. Other

**[SHOW Q3 IF Q2=4]** Q3. Which European country/countries have you visited? **[SHOW 5 OPEN-ENDED BOXES. USE AUTOSUGGEST FILL METHOD FROM COUNTRY LIST. INCLUDE CHECKBOX AT BOTTOM "I HAVE VISITED MORE THAN 5 COUNTRIES IN EUROPE". IF SELECTED, SHOW 10 ADDITIONAL OPEN-ENDED BOXES. ONLY FORCE ONE OPEN-END RESPONSE.]**

- |                           |                    |             |
|---------------------------|--------------------|-------------|
| 1. Albania                | 8. Bulgaria        | 16. Germany |
| 2. Andorra                | 9. Croatia         | 17. Greece  |
| 3. Armenia                | 10. Cyprus         | 18. Hungary |
| 4. Austria                | 11. Czech Republic | 19. Iceland |
| 5. Belarus                | 12. Denmark        | 20. Ireland |
| 6. Belgium                | 13. Estonia        | 21. Italy   |
| 7. Bosnia and Herzegovina | 14. Finland        | 22. Kosovo  |
|                           | 15. France         | 23. Latvia  |

- |                   |                 |                    |
|-------------------|-----------------|--------------------|
| 24. Liechtenstein | 34. Poland      | 44. Ukraine        |
| 25. Lithuania     | 35. Portugal    | 45. United Kingdom |
| 26. Luxembourg    | 36. Romania     | 46. Vatican City   |
| 27. Macedonia     | 37. San Marino  |                    |
| 28. Malta         | 38. Serbia      |                    |
| 29. Moldova       | 39. Slovakia    |                    |
| 30. Monaco        | 40. Slovenia    |                    |
| 31. Montenegro    | 41. Spain       |                    |
| 32. Netherlands   | 42. Sweden      |                    |
| 33. Norway        | 43. Switzerland |                    |

INTRO2. We'd like to ask you some questions about countries in Northern Europe. There are no right or wrong answers – we simply want to understand your perceptions.

Northern Europe **[SHOW ALL]**

...

*Q4 surveys the respondent's opinion on how well-known are the individual Nordic countries in China.*

...

Q5. If money was not a concern, which of these Northern European countries would you be most interested in visiting? Please rank all 5 countries where 1 = most interested in visiting and 5 = least interested in visiting. **[SHOW PUNCHES 1-5 IN SAME ORDER AS Q4 PUNCHES.]**

**RANKING QUESTION]**

1. Iceland
2. Denmark
3. Finland
4. Norway
5. Sweden

Q5b. Why would you be most interested in visiting **[PIPE-IN Q5 RANK 1 ANSWER]**? **[OPEN-END FORCED RESPONSE]**

Finland Exposure **[SHOW ALL]**

**[IF Q3=14 AUTOCODE Q6=1 AND SKIP TO Q7]** Q6. Have you heard of Finland prior to taking this survey?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Not sure

Q7. When you hear the word “Finland”, what are the first three things that come to mind? **[3 OPEN-ENDED TEXT BOXES. FORCE RESPONSE IN ALL 3 BOXES]**

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

Q7b. Please rate the three words you provided as positive, neutral, or negative.

[Punches:]

1. Negative
2. Slightly negative
3. Neutral
4. Slightly positive
5. Positive

[List:]

1. **[Q7 RANK 1]**
2. **[Q7 RANK 2]**
3. **[Q7 RANK 3]**

Finland Perceptions **[SHOW ALL]**

...

*QMAXDIFF exercise ranks 25 different statements about Finland according to how much the respondent agrees to the statements.*

*Q8-Q11 survey the respondents’ perceptions on Finnish people, Finnish culture, Finnish knowhow and industry sectors as well as Finland as a tourist destination*

...

Finland Visitors: **[SHOW Q12-Q16 ONLY IF Q3=14. OTHERWISE SKIP TO QCLOSE.]**

You mentioned earlier that you’ve previously visited Finland. In conclusion, we’d like to know a little bit more about your experience visiting Finland.

...

*Q12-Q16 survey the background information on the previous visits to Finland. Survey attributes include the number of times of visiting Finland, the year of the most recent visit, the purpose of visit, length of visitation and whether Finland was the only destination country of the trip.*

...

QCLOSE. Thank you for sharing your opinions! That concludes our survey today.

简体

QS1. 您的性别:

1. 男
2. 女

QS2 出身年份:

QS3. 居住城市:

1. 北京
2. 上海
3. 广州
4. 重庆
5. 武汉
6. 香港
7. 澳门
8. 台北
9. 沈阳
10. 天津
11. 西安
12. 成都
13. 石家庄
14. 深圳
15. 其他

QS4. 教育程度:

1. 中学
2. 高中
3. 中专/大专
4. 本科
5. 硕士
6. 博士或以上

...QS5-QS7...

INTRO1. 恭喜您进入调查环节。本调查大约需要花费 10 分钟时间。调查答案没有对错，只是让我们了解您的感受和看法。请放心，您的答案将会保密。

### 旅行经验

Q1. 在所列选项中您曾经做过哪些？可选多项。

1. 国外旅游
2. 购买汽车
3. 听音乐会

4. 购买洗衣机
5. 参观游乐园
6. 以上的都没做过

Q2. 您去过国外旅游，请勾选去过旅游的国家。可选多项。

1. 美国
2. 南美洲
3. 加拿大
4. 欧洲
5. 俄罗斯
6. 非洲
7. 亚洲国家（除中国外）
8. 澳大利亚/新西兰
9. 中东
10. 其他

Q3. 去过哪些欧洲国家？

- |               |           |           |
|---------------|-----------|-----------|
| 1. 阿尔巴尼亚      | 15. 法国    | 31. 黑山共和国 |
| 2. 安道尔        | 16. 德国    | 32. 荷兰    |
| 3. 亚美尼亚       | 17. 希腊    | 33. 挪威    |
| 4. 奥地利        | 18. 匈牙利   | 34. 波兰    |
| 5. 白俄罗斯       | 19. 冰岛    | 35. 葡萄牙   |
| 6. 比利时        | 20. 爱尔兰   | 36. 罗马尼亚  |
| 7. 波斯尼亚和黑塞哥维那 | 21. 意大利   | 37. 圣马力诺  |
| 8. 保加利亚       | 22. 科索沃   | 38. 塞尔维亚  |
| 9. 克罗地亚       | 23. 拉脱维亚  | 39. 斯洛伐克  |
| 10. 塞浦路斯      | 24. 列支敦士登 | 40. 斯洛文尼亚 |
| 11. 捷克        | 25. 立陶宛   | 41. 西班牙   |
| 12. 丹麦        | 26. 卢森堡   | 42. 瑞典    |
| 13. 爱沙尼亚      | 27. 马其顿   | 43. 瑞士    |
| 14. 芬兰        | 28. 马耳他   | 44. 乌克兰   |
|               | 29. 摩尔多瓦  | 45. 英国    |
|               | 30. 摩纳哥   | 46. 梵蒂冈城  |

INTRO2. 关于北欧国家的一些问题。调查答案没有对错，只是让我们了解您的感受和看法。

北欧

...Q4...

Q5. 除去经济方面的原因，您最感兴趣去哪个北欧国家旅游？请给以下 5 个国家排名（1=最感兴趣，5=最不感兴趣）

1. 冰岛

2. 丹麦
3. 芬兰
4. 挪威
5. 瑞典

Q5b. 您为什么最感兴趣访问

体验芬兰

Q6. 在本调查前您听说过芬兰吗?

1. 是
2. 否
3. 不确定

Q7. 说到芬兰，您最初想到的 3 个词汇是：

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

Q7b. 请评价您以上所提到的三个词汇是：正面、中性或负面

1. 负面
2. 微负面
3. 中性
4. 微正面
5. 正面

对芬兰的看法

...QMAXDIFF, Q8-Q11...

访问芬兰

前面提到过您以前访问过芬兰。请详细说明您访问芬兰的经历。

...Q12-Q16...

QCLOSE. 非常感谢您的分享。调查完毕！

繁體

QS1. 您的性別：

1. 男
2. 女

QS2 出身年份：

QS3. 居住城市：

1. 北京
2. 上海
3. 廣州
4. 重慶
5. 武漢
6. 香港
7. 澳門
8. 臺北
9. 沈陽
10. 天津
11. 西安
12. 成都
13. 石家莊
14. 深圳
15. 其他

QS4. 教育程度：

1. 中學
2. 高中
3. 中專/大專
4. 本科
5. 碩士
6. 博士或以上

...QS5-QS7...

INTRO1. 恭喜您進入調查環節。本調查大約需要花費 10 分鐘時間。調查答案沒有對錯，只是讓我們了解您的感受和看法。請放心，您的答案將會保密。

旅行經驗

Q1. 在所列選項中您曾經做過哪些？可選多項。

1. 國外旅遊
2. 購買汽車
3. 聽音樂會
4. 購買洗衣機



5. 參觀遊樂園
6. 以上的都沒做過

Q2. 您去過國外旅遊，請勾選去過旅遊的國家。可選多項。

1. 美國
2. 南美洲
3. 加拿大
4. 歐洲
5. 俄羅斯
6. 非洲
7. 亞洲國家（除中國外）
8. 澳大利亞/新西蘭
9. 中東
10. 其他

Q3. 去過哪些歐洲國家？

- |               |           |           |
|---------------|-----------|-----------|
| 1. 阿爾巴尼亞      | 17. 希臘    | 33.       |
| 2. 安道爾        | 18. 匈牙利   | 34. 挪威    |
| 3. 亞美尼亞       | 19. 冰島    | 35. 波蘭    |
| 4. 奧地利        | 20. 愛爾蘭   | 36. 葡萄牙   |
| 5. 白俄羅斯       | 21. 意大利   | 37. 羅馬尼亞  |
| 6. 比利時        | 22. 科索沃   | 38. 聖馬力諾  |
| 7. 波斯尼亞和黑塞哥維那 | 23. 拉脫維亞  | 39. 塞爾維亞  |
| 8. 保加利亞       | 24. 列支敦士登 | 40. 斯洛伐克  |
| 9. 克羅地亞       | 25. 立陶宛   | 41. 斯洛文尼亞 |
| 10. 塞浦路斯      | 26. 盧森堡   | 42. 西班牙   |
| 11. 捷克        | 27. 馬其頓   | 43. 瑞典    |
| 12. 丹麥        | 28. 馬耳他   | 44. 瑞士    |
| 13. 愛沙尼亞      | 29. 摩爾多瓦  | 45. 烏克蘭   |
| 14. 芬蘭        | 30. 摩納哥   | 46. 英國    |
| 15. 法國        | 31. 黑山共和國 | 47. 梵蒂岡城  |
| 16. 德國        | 32. 荷蘭    |           |

INTRO2. 關於北歐國家的一些問題。調查答案沒有對錯，只是讓我們了解您的感受和看法。

北歐

...Q4...

Q5. 除去經濟方面的原因，您最感興趣去哪個北歐國家旅遊？請給以下 5 個國家排名（1=最感興趣，5=最不感興趣）

1. 冰島
2. 丹麥

3. 芬蘭
4. 挪威
5. 瑞典

Q5b. 您為什麼最感興趣訪問

體驗芬蘭

Q6. 在本調查前您聽說過芬蘭嗎？

1. 是
2. 否
3. 不確定

Q7. 說到芬蘭，您最初想到的 3 個詞匯是：

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

Q7b. 請評價您以上所提到的三個詞匯是：正面、中性或負面

1. 負面
2. 微負面
3. 中性
4. 微正面
5. 正面

對芬蘭的看法

...QMAXDIFF, Q8-Q11...

訪問芬蘭

前面提到過您以前訪問過芬蘭。請詳細說明您訪問芬蘭的經歷。

...Q12-Q16...

QCLOSE. 非常感謝您的分享。調查完畢！

